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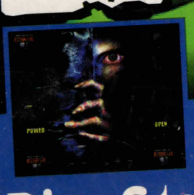

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FREE! STICKERS

By now you'll have recieved your fab free sticker set. Don't forget that there are seven in the series to collect so you can give your PlayStation a new look whenever you fancy! Don't delay – get 'em in! Also this month we get our hands on the *Star Wars: Masters of Teräs Käsi*, alongside the definitive reivews of *Bushido Blade* and *Grand Theft Auto*. And finally we've exciting news about *PlayStation Power* itself! The times are a changin' See page 9...

7 TO COLLECT

CONT

PlayStation Power

Dream Editor: Sean Atkins
He's just returned carrying a big bulging sack with "new ideas" scrawled on the side. At last!

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e-mail: brad.merrett@futurenet.co.uk

Designer: Ade Owens
Let me have my Fuse bar back. Go on, I can handle it. Just one more fix. Please. Just a Smartie then, a mint, anything. I need snacks. GIVE ME A TWIGLET!

EXCLUSIVE!

COVER STORY

Has your Force gone a bit on the flabby side? You want to tone it back up again with the Complete Jedi Workout, also known as *Masters Of Teras Kasi*, the brilliant new Star Wars beat-'em-up. Sabres out on page 56.

56

Plus! Under Construction, the section of the mag where we strive to bring you superb previews of the hottest games around. This month we have *Actua Ice Hockey*, *Forsaken*, *Dark Omen*, *Arcade's Greatest Hits 2*, *N2O* and *Chill*.

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FREE Stickers

This month we give you one of seven unique sets of exclusive PlayStation stickers to spruce up your favourite console. While you're at it, why not buy another couple of issues so you can change your 'look' whenever you want. Wahey!

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STAR WARS

Exclusive!

Masters of Teras Kasi

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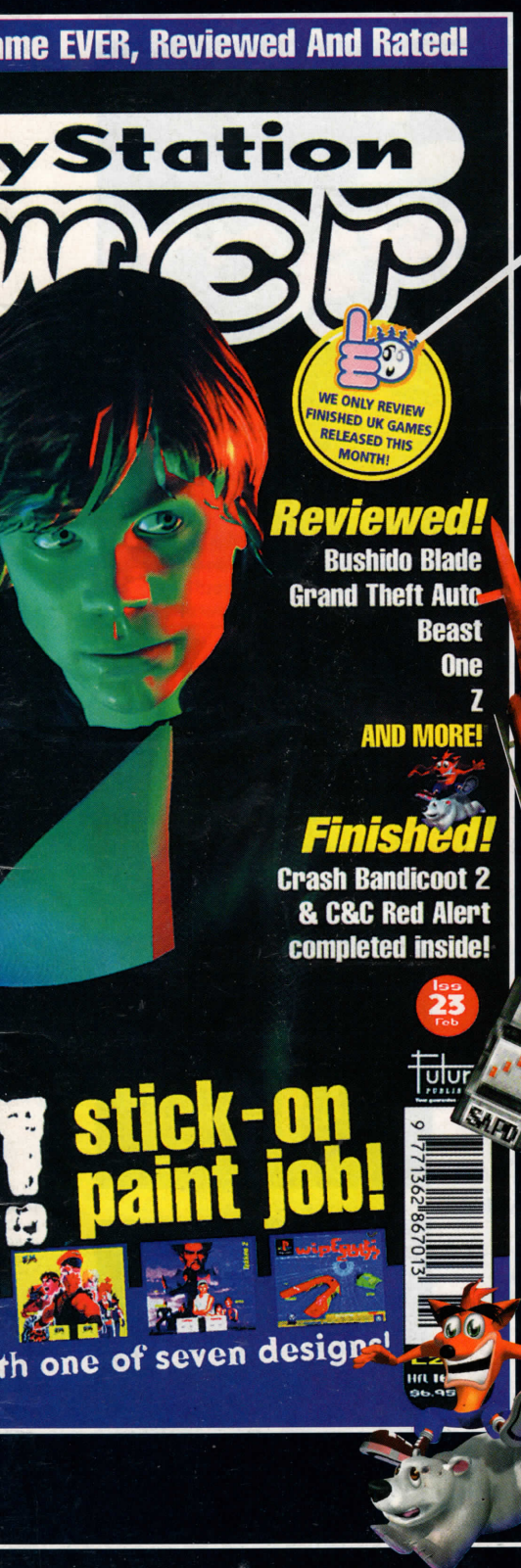

Our Pledge

No falsely-claimed exclusives!
No reviewing unfinished games!
PlayStation Power provides the definitive guide to PlayStation.

All the latest games!

19 Beat-'em-ups, eh? All very well and good, but it's not very realistic is it, all that fireball stuff? But now there's a game that replicates traditional Japanese weapons based combat. Chop some heads in the highly engaging *Bushido Blade*. You can also engage in some criminal activity with the very dodgy *Grand Theft Auto*. If your desire for action is still not satisfied, then wait until you see *One*. It's one of the most mind-blowing shoot-'em-ups we've ever played. You'll need to wind down a bit after that lot, so why not take a leisurely wander through reviews of *Bloody Roar*, *Z*, *Critical Depth*, *Rampage World Tour*, *Maximum Force* and *NBA Hangtime*. Aaand... relax.

Massive Tippage!

73 Three full pages of new hints, tips and cheats for the latest games followed by the concluding parts of our huge *C&C: Red Alert* and *Crash Bandicoot 2 solutions*!

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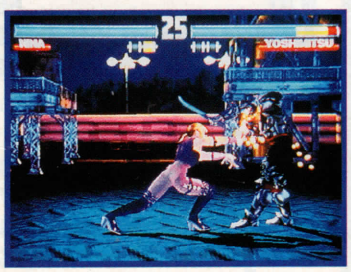
The lighting effects look even more impressive than ever, with particular emphasis on contact flashes. Here Paul shows Nina a thing or two.

New boy Hwoarang shows off some of his motion-capture routines. Hwang Suiri, a real life tae kwon do champion, did the honours here.

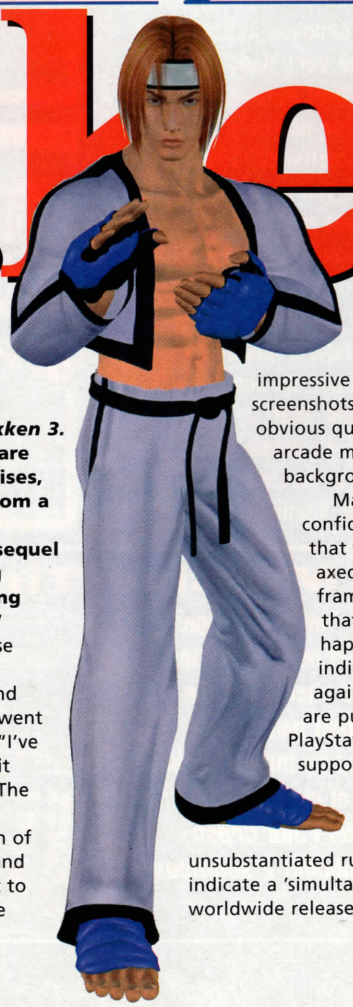
Tekken 3



As you can see, the polygonal backgrounds look lovely. Phew.

At last, we can reveal the world's first actual PlayStation screenshots of *Tekken 3*. Naturally, Namco are making bullish noises, as you'd expect from a company publicly announcing "the sequel to the best selling PlayStation fighting game of all time."

One insider, Jesse Taylor, a member of Namco's Research and Development staff, went further. He told us: "I've seen the game and it looks phenomenal. The consumers want an awesome translation of the arcade version and we plan on giving it to them. They won't be disappointed."



The most impressive aspect of these screenshots (apart from their, obvious quality) is that the arcade machine's polygonal backgrounds are intact.

Many 'experts' confidently predicted that they would be axed to keep the frame-rate up. The fact that this hasn't happened clearly indicates that, once again, Namco's boffins are pushing the PlayStation beyond its supposed limits.

The game will be released in the early spring, and unsubstantiated rumours currently indicate a 'simultaneous worldwide release'. Excited yet?

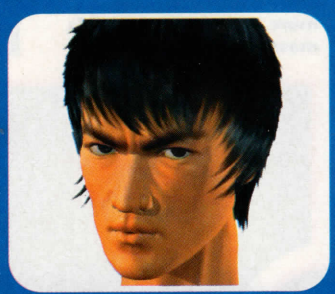
(Top) Hard to tell who'd be in more pain during this exchange.

The Tekken 3 Fighters

Jin Kazama
The son of Mishima and Jun Kazuya, both now deceased, and the game's main hero. Trained by grandad Heihachi and out to avenge his dear old mum's death.

Lei Wulong
45-year-old international supercop, joins the third King of the Iron Fist tournament in the hope of getting to fight old adversary Bruce

Paul Phoenix
Now 46, Paul has augmented his über-flat top with a grisly beard and a distinctly feline appearance. He's more determined than ever to finally win the ultimate prize.



Forest Law
Son of Marshal Law, tempted to join the tournament by his dad's old pal Paul Phoenix. Bruce Lee lookalike with a high pitched style.

King
An orphan, raised by the original, now dead, King. After a natter with Armor King, concerning his former's demise he's livid and ready for rucking.

Nina Williams
She and sister Anna were subjected to a deep sleep experiment by the God of Fighting. Re-awakened to assassinate Jin Kazama.

Lin Xiayou
Fights from two different stances and employs Chinese martial art kempo. Many tasty combos make her a pretty good opponent juggler.

Yoshimitsu
Nasty looking 'Space Ninja' who's actually a good guy. After the God of Fighting's blood, as it's the only known antidote to good pal Dr Boskonovitch's illness.

Hwoarang
Prodigy of Baek, *Tekken 2*'s tae kwon do master. Motion capture from real life tae kwon do champ Hwang Suiri.

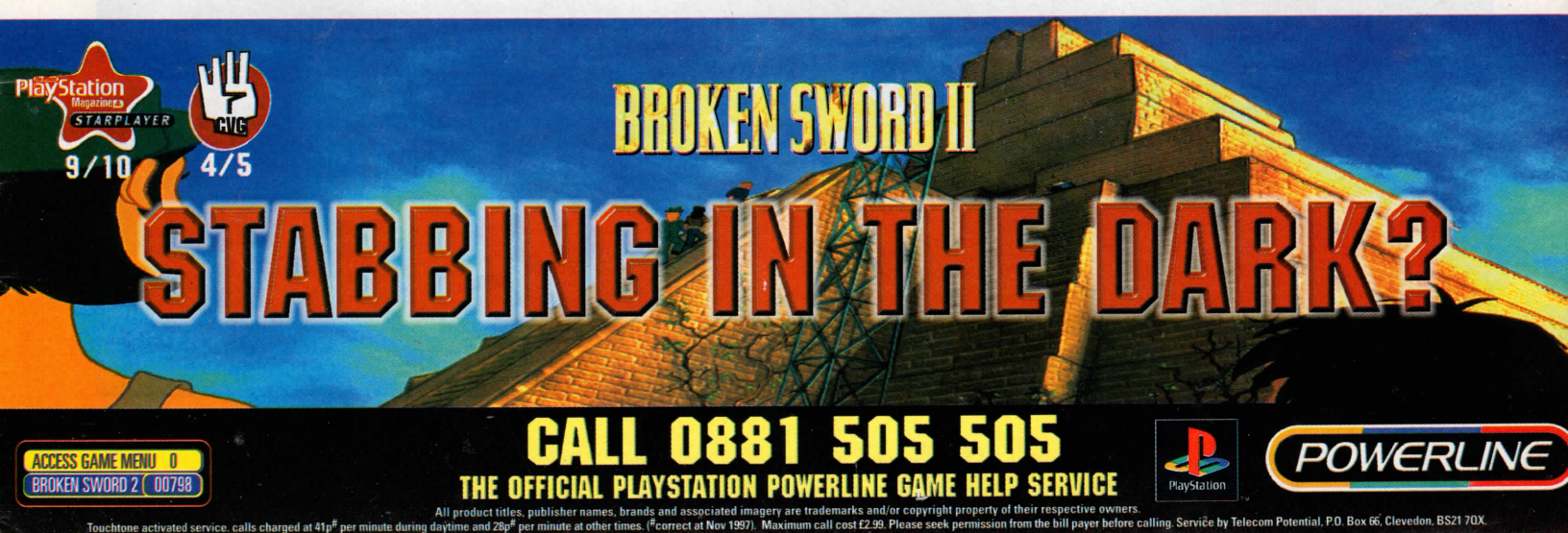
Stop Press

Your first stop for all the latest factoids and truths. Stop Press delivers...

Just as we were going to press Namco released shots of a PlayStation-only secret character in *Tekken 3*. Yes, he's a nippy little fire-breathing dragon, and his name's Gon. He's already quite famous in Japan, apparently...

...Konami have confirmed that hotly anticipated *Resident Evil*-beater *Metal Gear Solid* will be a springtime release in Japan. That means we're still on for an early summer UK release. Get in...

...Konami have also confirmed (well, admitted) that they're working on an as-yet-unnamed fighter. At the moment the project is top secret. Best be watching this space...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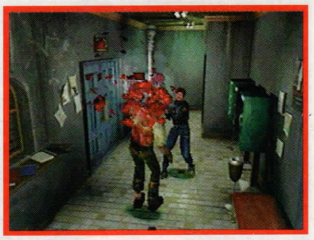
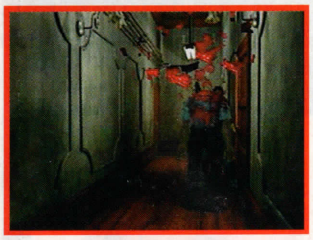
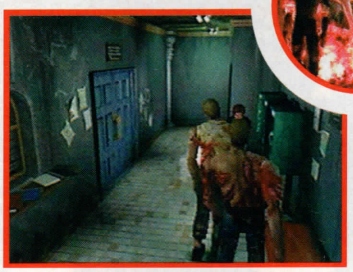
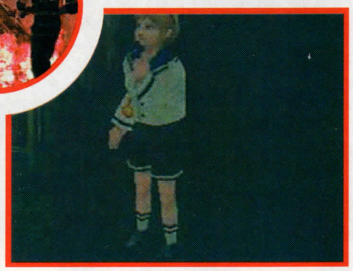
New Shots

Resident Evil 2

Another month, another *Resident Evil 2* update. There's no new information as such this month, but we thought you'd like to see these illuminating new shots. As well as closer looks at all of the playable characters (including the 12 year old daughter of an evil professor), you can see some more of the impressive backgrounds in and around the sewers and police station. And just what is that copper doing with the body on his desk? Expect a much more in-depth look at this massive game very soon.

Get in! Just look at this beauty! Proof positive that *Resi 2*'s bosses are going to be bigger, more impressive and frankly weirder than the original's.

It's shaping up to be the best game yet and we can't wait!

New character alert! This poor 12 year old lass needs rescuing too.

Playboy!

No, not the specialist magazine stuffed with fascinating articles on cars, but our own made-up name for a potentially very exciting piece of kit from Sony. According to Japanese reports (alright, rumours), the company are working on a hand held console! Having nabbed Nintendo's home market, are they about to nobble the game boy? Don't bet against it.

With PlayStation 2 scheduled to appear in 1999 (in Japan at least), word has it that Sony could re-jig and miniaturise the PlayStation. This new unit could incorporate a hi-tech colour screen, and allow you to play all your existing PlayStation games on the move. The problems are daunting however, with a CD-drive and colour screen producing a massive power drain that will bring tears to the eyes of most batteries within a very short time. Still, if anyone can produce the innovations necessary, then surely it's Sony. We'll bring you more news on this exciting development as and when it breaks.

Final Round

Why jump in the ring and risk injury, when you can stay safely out of the limelight and train someone else to take the pain for you? *Final Round*, from Atlus, confines you to the gym and, on fight night, the corner. It's your job to take a raw learner and turn them into a world champion with the emotional side of things as important as the extensive physical training options.

If, for instance, you don't bond with your protege, he won't follow your instructions when he's fighting. It's up to you to come up with winning strategies and convince your fighter that they're correct.

Motion-capture's been used extensively, but it sounds like the tactical side of things will outweigh the admittedly rather pretty graphics. The game's due for a February release in Japan and we can expect it over here, well, never, to be honest.

'Come on son, keep your head down and your guard up...'

'... then get in the ring and fatally injure the bugger.'

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#24 ON SALE 25 FEB

C*ontra*, alias *Probotector*, is one of the longest running and well respected names in the shoot-'em-up business, and Japanese giants Konami aren't about to let a best-selling brand die, despite the fierce critical and commercial slating *Contra: Legacy of War*, the series' first PlayStation outing, received.

The ultra-snappily titled *C* is in fact the 6th in this ultra-violent odyssey, and looks like sticking with *Legacy*'s 'new' 3D approach that upset so many of the series' more fanatical, um, fans.

If Konami can manage to make this latest effort just slightly less difficult than its nigh-on impossible predecessor, while retaining the hallmark action frenzy, then the series' good name could still be salvaged, and no nonsense action fans should be more than pleased with the results.

Here's hoping that this is the case when the game finally arrives later in the summer.

Bandy legged nutter lets rip in Olde Bradford On Avon.

That's a bit more like it. A huge metal chopper of a boss.

Twinbee RPG

Another well respected, if slightly more obscure Konami series is about to make its PlayStation debut in Japan. Provisionally titled *Twinbee RPG*, the game drags this cutest of shooters into a more sedate 3D polygonal adventure format. As you can see, texture-mapping is only sparingly used, giving the whole game an anime feel in keeping with its cutesy predecessors.

You take the role of a normal, everyday earth boy, who's been transported to Donburi Island and given the job of defeating one Doctor Walmon (evil). On the plus side you get to pilot Twinbee, Winbee and Gwinbee (good), each of which have their own special attacks. Sadly, as before, these weapons are a bell, a hammer and a ribbon. Any big eared nails or presents will think twice before tackling you then. Good luck.

Twinbee RPG will be cuter than a bunny kissing a lickle flower.

Shadow Madness

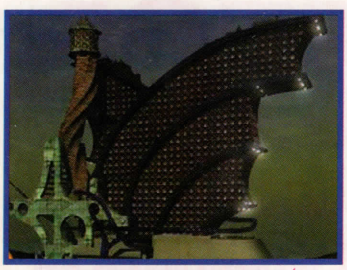
Yes, another RPG, and another company that's spun off from Square. When Square USA moved their American HQ a number of employees stayed where they were and set up Crave Productions, taking care of American Publishing themselves. *Shadow Madness* is their first product. It's lucky for them then that this RPG is already looking tasty, boasting the kind of production values that made *Final Fantasy VII* such a huge hit.

Like Square's smash, *Shadow Madness* plonks polygonal characters onto lovingly pre-rendered backdrops and concentrates on telling a gripping story. Ted Wolsey of Crave even goes so far as to claim that the game's 'visuals are every bit as stunning' as *FFVII*. Bold claims, but a quick glance at these screenshots should convince you to reserve judgement for now.

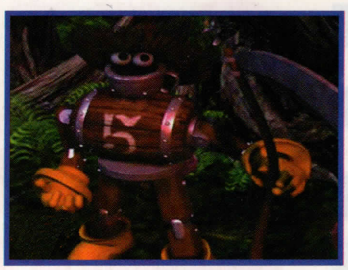
The plot certainly sounds promisingly ambitious. Ted Wolsey again; 'Some of the major themes are themes that we're living with now in the '90s. One is the idea of contagion, or disease. We're all living with any manner of diseases that are terrifying. Another idea is rumour, what happens to the towns when people start hearing about the disease. It's about something that's smashing parts of your world and you're not really sure why, it's a matter of being thrown out there, unprepared, and trying to learn about the world around you and come up with some reason for what's happened to you.' Mmm, whatever you say, Ted.

The game's not scheduled for a US release until September, and we know from bitter experience that projects this ambitious tend to sail past their deadlines. We'll keep you posted.

Pre-rendered backgrounds and polygon figures. Sound familiar?



Yes, *Shadow Madness* is following in *FFVII*'s huge footprints.



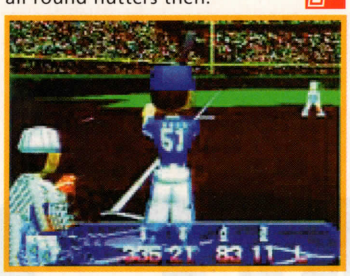
Barrel of Beer Man, on his way to rescue the party people.

Super Live Stadium

Baseball and Growth sims, two Japanese gaming obsessions. Combine the two and you get a product that could, potentially, hit the Eastern spot. *Super Live Stadium*, from Square spin-off Aques, demands that you 'grow' your own personal team of individual Baseballers. Mad!

Most of each player's initial development is achieved through a variety of training routines, but they only really grow as they play actual competitive games.

Obviously, the ultimate aim is to develop a blend of specialists, each with special skills. One for baseball fans, management freaks and all round nutters then.



See that fella there, it's your job to nurture him. Sort his legs out.

Mad Jap Corner

Now that the dust has settled we feel we must point out one of the most disturbing outbreaks of Jap Madness we've seen.

Those of you who pay attention to the news may have seen the reports filtering out of Tokyo in December of last year, when nearly 700 young children were hospitalised while watching Nintendo spin-off cartoon series Pocket Monsters.

One five second sequence, where the principal character's eyes strobed red, sent the unfortunate children into fits not unlike those suffered by epileptics.

And the madness in this case? Well, when the show was originally shown only about 500 children suffered from fits. The remainder were only afflicted when the clip was replayed on a later news bulletin. Doh!

Win groovy PlayStation stuff!

Look at this stuff. Lovely isn't it? Sony's new range of PlayStation merchandise finally breaks away from the crap heavy metal T-shirt school of promotional thought forever. Instead, there's some subtle and, damnit, stylish 'Shapes' branding, as seen on the stunning TV ads, and a range of top quality, grossly trendy garments that you'll actually be proud to wear. If you've registered your PlayStation, by sending off the little card you find in the box, you'll already have your glossy catalogue. If not, then do so right now, you fools!

The gear on offer ranges from vests, through T-shirts, sweatshirts and hats, right up to two highly sexed bags and a smart, waterproof jacket. To get some for free simply answer the question below and send it to:

PlayStation Power
Groovy Sony Gear
30 Monmouth St
Bath
BA1 2BW

Question: Why is T-shirt called a T-shirt?

Stop Press

... Hot leakage just in. Tony Gubba will provide the commentary for Konami's *International Superstar Soccer '98*...

... Crack Japanese developers Muu Muu (the people behind *Jumping Flash* and *Ghost In The Shell*) have teamed up with Enix to co-develop *Astro Noku*, a quirky space farming game. It's up to you, Mr Robot Farmer to grow galaxy-vegetables on your galaxy-farm...

... *Enigma*, from Koei, looks like a bit of a dark horse. This 3D action affair combines *Tomb Raider*-style exploration and shooting, with proper beat-'em-up fighting...

... *Coolboarders* is being tweaked for an arcade release. *Coolboarders – Arcade Jam* will be an entirely new game...

...*Public School Justice* (also known as *Rival School* – see PSXpress 19), Capcom's stunning arcade beat-'em-up, turns out to run on a the PlayStation compatible System 11 board. Surprising, given the graphics. The good news is that a home version is thus a certainty...

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I AM TONBA!

No, we haven't lost it, that's the name of a previously-unheard-of platformer currently under development by the mighty Sony of Japan, no less.

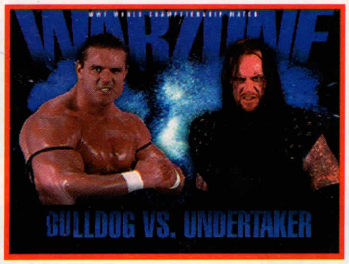
Concrete info is hard to come by at the moment, but we can tell you that the Tonba in the title is a Maogli-like jungle boy, who is, in turn, you. And while the exact nature of your quest through the fiercely colourful pseudo 3D landscapes remains unclear, we can reveal the main weapon in your off-kilter armoury.

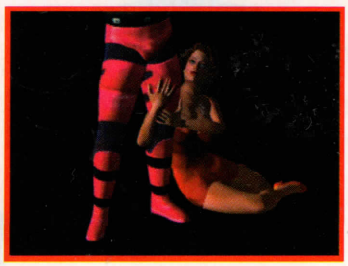
In order to overcome the doubtless numerous and awkward adversaries blocking your left-to-right progress you can grab the nearest animal and throw it at them. Not likely to appease the animal rights lobby, but pretty effective nonetheless.

As you can see *I Am Tonba!* should be a treat for your eyes, but then *Pandemonium 2*, wasn't exactly ugly was it?

What's it all about? Evil pigs and talkative roofers, clearly.

WWF WARZONE



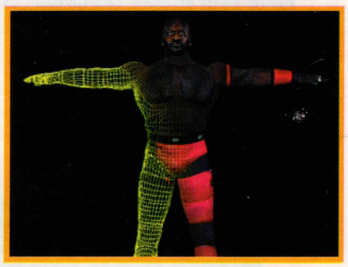


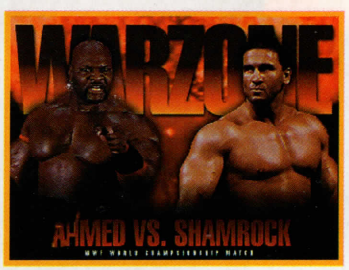
Yes, another WWF game! Can you contain your excitement? Are your spandex tights getting tighter at the very thought? Let's hope not, eh.

Once again it's Acclaim that are really spoiling us with their rope-jumping action, but at this stage the only firm evidence of any real originality in *Warzone* is the Create-a-Wrestler mode.

Yes, you can create your very own wrestler, tweaking everything from the colour scheme and layout of your chosen outfit to less pressing concerns like your muscle mass and speed. If this all sounds like just a bit too much effort then you could always just opt for one of the 12 painstakingly digitised representations of 'real WWF stars', like the Undertaker and, um, Shamrock.

What else? Well, there are 50 individual taunts, each with their own FMV segment. That should make all the difference then. Look out for this grapple fest in the Spring, if you can really be bothered.





All that 3D power, dedicated to creating a shiny man in pink pants.

Need For Speed 3

You might not feel the need, but Electronic Arts are readying *Need For Speed 3* anyway. If it continues *2*'s disturbing downward trend from *1*'s less-than-impressive heights then we could be looking at the worst racing game in the world... ever!

Naturally, EA's in-house developers assure us that they've learned from their mistakes and are confident that this time they'll get it right. We certainly hope so, because another dose of *2*'s grotty textures, choppy frame-rate and polygon break-up might well send us over the edge. As you can see from these shots things are looking good, if slightly familiar, at this stage. Once again, the game takes a 'simmy' approach, attempting to accurately model the performance and handling of a range of tip top supercars. Also returning are the cops that litter the long, winding road courses, although they're now even more aggressive, apparently.

We'll be keeping a sceptical eye on this game's development, so expect more info and shots from us well before its projected release date in May.

DateLine

16th January
On this day in the year of our Lord, nineteen hundred and ninety eight, you can buy *Nightmare Creatures* and *Shadow Master*.

20th January
Footy fans get ready, *adidas Power Soccer 2* is out today. Pity you've all already bought *FIFA* and *Actua*.

26th January
Footy fans get ready – again – for today you'll be able to buy *Championship Manager All Stars*. Heard of that one? Oh dear.

29th January
Steel Reign hits the shops today, which is probably a good thing, for somebody.

30th January
The rather excellent *Cool Boarders 2* will adorn the shelves of gameshops everywhere.

1st February
Crivens! It's *Riven*. Anyone fancy a bit of *Myst* sequel-ery? Good.

3rd February
They don't just appear in cheesy movies. Fingers crossed, *Spice World*, the game hits the shops today.

13th February
Deathtrap Dungeon will be delighting adventurers everywhere on this day in '98. Or will it? We shall see...

15th February
PFA Soccer Manager anyone? Another footy management game sneaks its way onto shelving. Curious...

18th February
Skull Monkeys will be available as of now. Review next issue.

20th February
The Official UK PlayStation Magazine goes on sale today. A fiver for a mag and a load of demos? Can't be bad.

25th February
It's time to experience the thrills of *Bug Riders*. Better than that, today's the day that the all-new 132-page *PlayStation Power* goes on sale!

5th March
Powerboat – the racing game featuring boats with a lot of power – hits the shelves.

Ken's dragon punch seems to be present and correct. It had to be really, though, didn't it? Oosh-ka!

The fighters might be stumpy and, yes, cute, but they still pack a bit of a punch. And a kick. And a fireball.

Pocket Fighter update!

Ah, Zangief's chest is still hairy, even in super-deformed form.

Capcom have finally confirmed that there will be a PlayStation version of their quirky arcade fighter *Pocket Fighter*, so we thought we'd bring you some more detailed information on a game that promises to mix some humour into the classic Capcom recipe. Best of all the game continues Capcom's latest craze by mixing fighters from their entire range of beat-'em-ups into one big bundle of liberally cross-pollinating aggro.

In keeping with its cutesy, superdeformed characters, costume.

Once again, though, the thorny issue of frame rates threatens to scupper things. The Saturn version will use the memory expansion card, and it remains to be seen whether Capcom can find a really satisfactory solution to the PlayStation's sprite handling problems. We'll find out soon enough, though a release date has yet to be announced. We confidently expect it to appear in Japan sometime this spring.

Pocket Fighter has a fairly simple, accessible control system, consisting of only three buttons, a punch, a kick and a 'special'. This, of course, is where Capcom have put their beloved fighting depth in. As well as the usual stick-and-attack activated specials, the game uses a charged bar to activate further attacks. Best of all, as far as we know at this stage, are the Flash Combos, which are not only devastatingly powerful but can also change your fighter's

A simple three-button approach belies a more complicated...

... game system that sees you collecting and using gems.

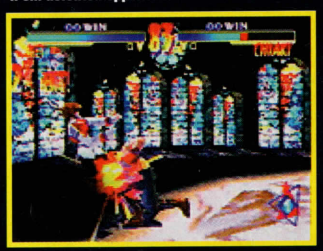
Stop Press

... Fox Interactive US have signed a deal with **Gremlin**. The Sheffield coders get their games published in the states and Fox get to create a Fox Sports Interactive brand...

... ***Mortal Kombat 4***, originally scheduled to appear in the spring has been put back an undisclosed amount of time. On the plus side, the developers claim that the PlayStation version will boast home-only features...

... Takara, the people who brought you the ***Toshinden*** series are working on a 3D action game. There's a dynamic camera and a head-to-head two-player mode, apparently. No name yet, though...

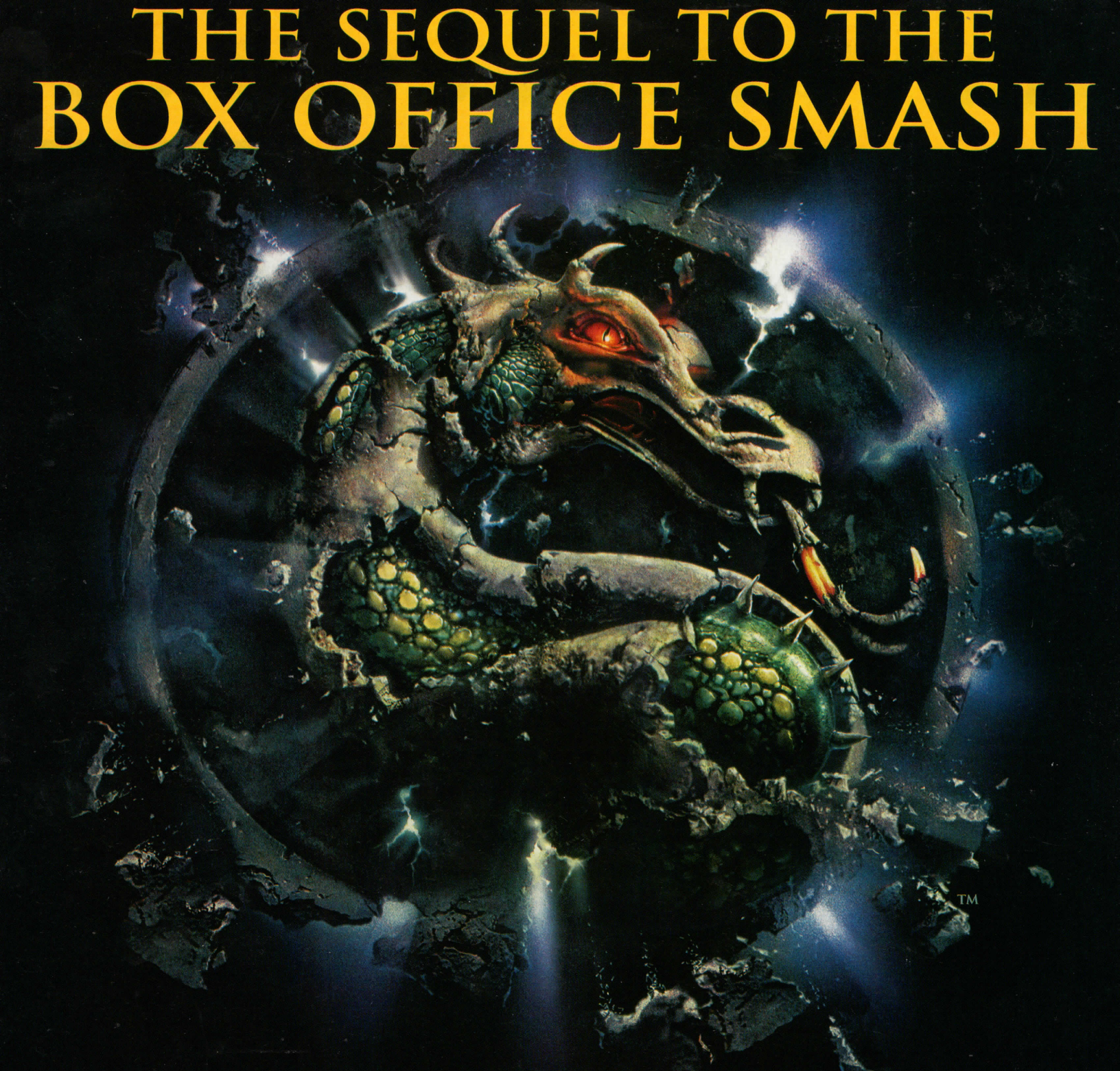
... Another 3D fighter? Oh, go on then. Jap developers Racdym are currently readying ***Critical Blow*** (below), and it looks pretty tasty to us. It includes customisable fighters, whose abilities you boost by collecting 'cards' from defeated opponents...



... **ANOTHER** 3D fighter?! Oh yes. Capcom are putting the finishing touches to ***Star Gladiator Episode II: Nightmare of Bilstein*** (below). There are 14 characters in all, and each has a different length super metre. Mmm...

... An extremely traditional 2D fighter? Mmm. ***Guilty Gear*** from Jap firm Arc System Works, concentrates on intricate fighting and fluid animation, so we're told. Fair enough...

THE SEQUEL TO THE BOX OFFICE SMASH



MORTAL KOMBAT® ANNIHILATION

12

You ain't seen nothing yet!

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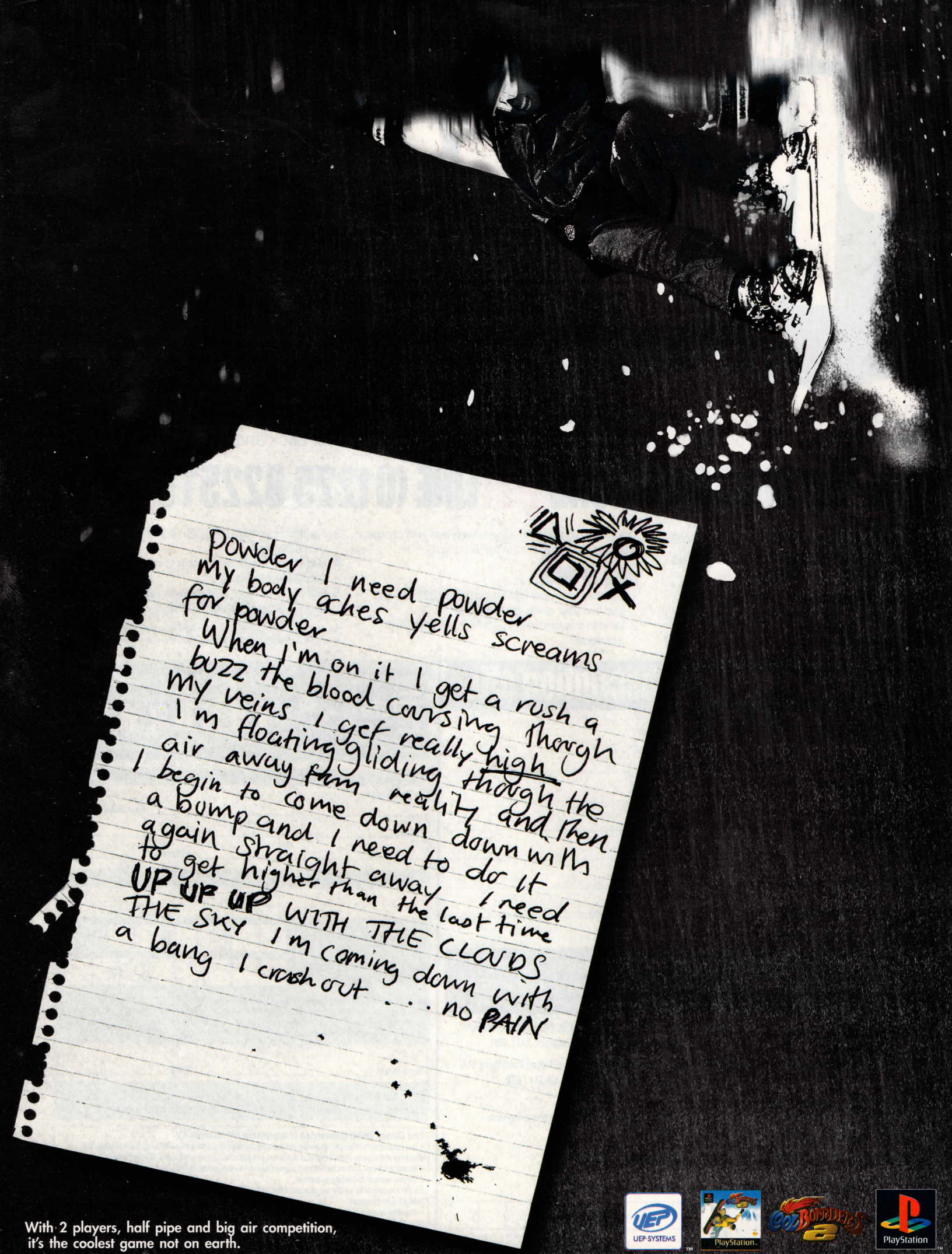
Powder I need powder
My body aches yells screams
for powder
When I'm on it I get a rush a
buzz the blood coursing through the
My veins I get really high though
I'm floating gliding down in
air away from reality and then
a bump and I need to do it
again straight away I need
to get higher than the last time
UP UP UP WITH THE CLOUDS
THE SKY I'm coming down with
a bang I crash out . . . no PAIN

With 2 players, half pipe and big air competition, it's the coolest game not on earth.

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REVIEWS

You NEED to know which games you should buy in the coming month. *PlayStation Power* prides itself on playing games to within an inch of their life. And then having another go. Don't you dare buy a game without reading this first...

Bushido Blade 20
Beat-'em-ups not realistic enough for you? Try this.

Grand Theft Auto 26
Steal cars, shoot cops, kill pedestrians. No don't.

One 32
The most manic, frantic shoot-'em-up ever, possibly.

Bloody Roar 36
Only two attack buttons, but loads of entertainment.

Z 40

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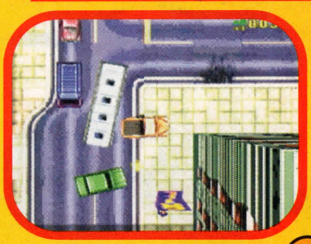
Bushido Blade: Realistic weapons combat. 20



GTA: Don't try this at home kids. It's illegal. 26

One: Classic shoot-'em-up – posh 3D graphics. 32

The Business!
All the nitty-gritty information you need on publishers, price, availability, multi-player features and peripheral compatibility is tucked up in this bit here.

Silky!
The month's silkiest, and best games get this little fella slapped across 'em.

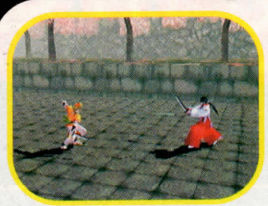
PowerTip
Gives you a firmer idea of what the game's like to play, AND helps you get started once you've stumped up the cash.

Score
What it all boils down to. We pour days of effort and nights of debate into our final verdicts. It's an at-a-glance review.

2 = rancid dregs
5 = totally average
7 = good effort
8 = it's a happener
9 = buy it!
10 = perfect

You Dirty Rotten Swine

Frowned upon you will be, but it's hard to pass up those nefarious opportunities for cheating and cowardice with only your conscience to prevent you taking the easy way out. When the idea of losing honourably for the sixteenth time is frustrating enough to prompt an alternative approach, *Bushido Blade* actually allows you to resort to the sort of underhand tactics that any respectable samurai would be ashamed to employ. And besides, the only person to see you cheating so shamefully is going to be dead in twenty seconds...



What underhand trickery is this? Gah!

Throwing mud at your opponent? Shameful.

Stabbing your opponent in the back? You cad!

Stabbing a downed opponent? In the head?

Cutting a blokes head in half? It's a disgrace!

From: Sony
Available: Early February
£44.99
1-2 Players
Memory Card
Link-up
Words: Will Groves

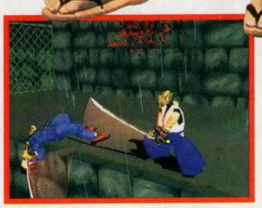
Bushido Blade

Like its cinematic counterpart, video game violence typically bears little resemblance to the sweaty, messy reality of two people hell bent on doing each other some serious damage, or indeed, some terminal damage. *Bushido Blade*, however, is not your typical video game and as such, can't be as easily pigeonholed as other blood-and-guts beat-'em-ups. It's too clever for that.

Despite appearances, this latest offering does not represent another attempt to successfully clone *Soul Blade*. The emphasis here is not on fantasy combat, but on cruelly realistic swordplay derived from authentic kenjutsu martial arts.

For a start, there are no energy bars. Instead, a successful hit will have an immediate and obvious effect that reflects the damage done – an arm or leg can be crippled, and wounding to the abdominal region can reduce your opponent to painful crouching and crawling. Matches can even end up with both players lurching about on their knees as they slog it out to the bitter end, with the goal being to score a good clean strike – one which penetrates all defenses and results in a brutally swift and instantaneous kill. Should you suffer an injury but survive in one of the Story Mode battles, you might even find your warrior sporting a dueling scar or a bandage to cover up his war wounds during his next death match.

In an innovative move that exploits the console's capacities, *Bushido Blade* is also one of the first truly 3D fighting



Look out, you're right on the edge of – oh.

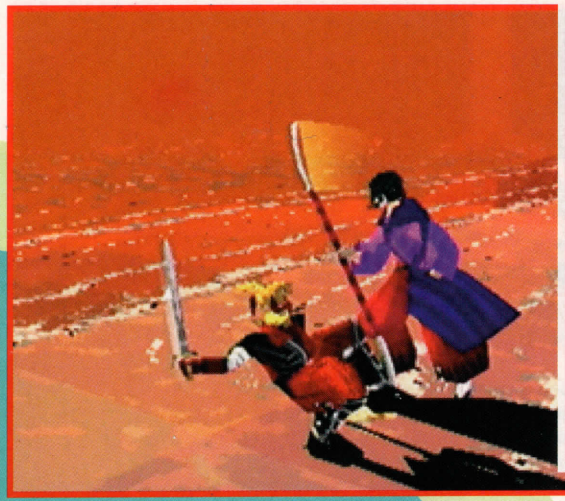
Traditional Nipponese fighting blades. Please.

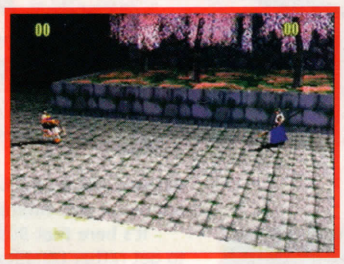
A heavy slice has the additional effect of felling bamboo (above).

Walls and other surfaces become transparent to keep you in view.

Damn – I had Colonel Mustard, in the orchard, with the wakizashi!

On The Beach by Chris Rea = very dull. On the beach with a speared-up 'Gene Simmons' boss = most thrilling.





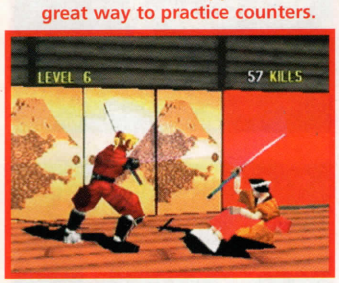
Story mode is cut short if you don't behave honourably, as here: Utsusemi won't meet Hanzaki or Mr Simmons.

games in terms of your freedom to roam. The grounds of a medieval Japanese stronghold (with some futuristic exceptions) comprise your arena and, although you may start in a random location, you're able to move to any other to continue your duel. Torii gates, bridges, blossom orchards, bamboo forests and even a wave-lapped shoreline can be explored, while special moves for climbing walls let you fight from higher ground. On a more immediate scale, the game supports Sony's analogue joypad and thus allows you to perform everything from subtle sidesteps to a full-blown mad dash (ideal for a nifty escape).

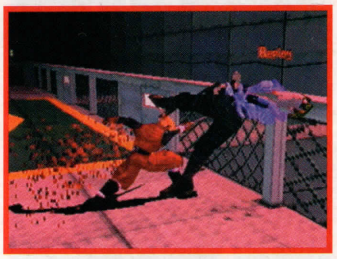
"*Bushido Blade* grants you the laxity to throw daggers, stab opponents in the back, throw dirt in their face or impale them..."

Then there's the original and actually-very-sensible way that the pad combinations are learnt. The character you play merely determines the trade-off you can make between speed and strength. You must then choose the particular weapon you will employ, with each one having its own unique set of moves. The short sword requires you to thrust and lunge, for example, while the hammer and the broadsword are ideal for

The death of 100 opponents: a great way to practice counters.



Rather fancifully, the man with the pistol loses to a fast blade.



Lithe legwork and analogue side-stepping for truly close combat.

"Kill me, and this huge invisible boulder will crush you. Honest."

"Akk! Which cretin left a huge invisible boulder behind me?'"

Suitably Sanguine

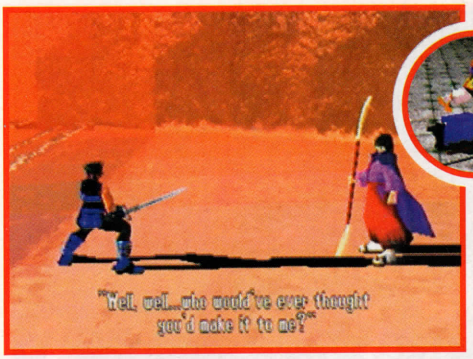
First released in Japan by an over-cautious Square, *Bushido Blade* originally featured an odd yellow spray in place of proper blood – an effect not dissimilar to throwing weak herbal tea over your opponent rather than hacking their limbs off. Incidentally the limbs (and heads) don't come off so it's not *that* gory but the rich claret that spouts after a killing blow will almost certainly land *Bushido Blade* an age rating.

Every sword slash is accompanied by a spurt of blackcurrant Tango.

The incessant bloodletting must earn the game a certification.

If only the actual limbs came off too. Now that'd be real gore.

Actually, it's not a tough game to complete – even on Hard – thanks to infinite continues.



King Of The Castle: "Climb up here, Grandad, and your fingers will be fishpaste. Ner!"

Some bouts can be over so quickly that the replay seems to last longer. A bit annoying.

Going for the leap attack? Not a great idea on a narrow bridge.

Corner your foe so they haven't got room to swing their blade.

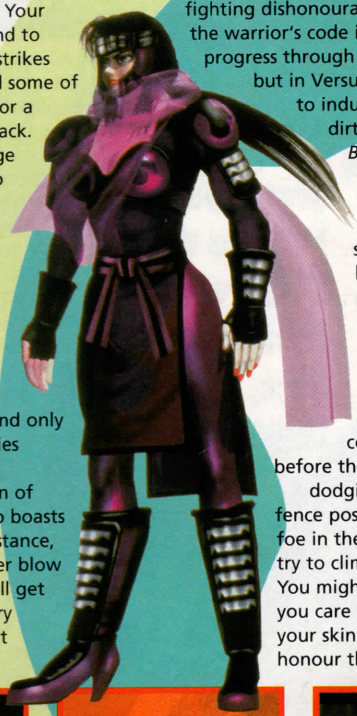
The advantages of the naginata are undermined by getting close.

Silently he closes in, raises his mighty blade, and... misses!

slashing and bludgeoning your opponent into submission.

It's here that *Bushido Blade* starts to get rather complex. Your four buttons correspond to high, middle and low strikes plus a parry move, and some of them can be chained for a preset sequence of attack. But you can also change your fighting stance to hold the weapon at three different heights, so those very same moves perform completely different actions depending on how your fighter is posed. It's wise to start off by learning the katana, and only training against enemies with the same sword, because the interaction of different weapons also boasts realistic effects. For instance, try to deflect a hammer blow with a sword and you'll get knocked senseless every time, even though that same defensive move might have had the edge on a rapier in your last battle.

Finally, there's the option of fighting dishonourably. Adhering to the warrior's code is the only way to progress through the Story Mode, but in Versus Mode you're free to indulge in all manner of dirty tricks. *Bushido Blade* grants you the no-holds-barred laxity to throw daggers and shuriken from the hip, stab opponents in the back, chuck dirt in their face, impale enemies on the floor – why, you can even turn and run like a cowardly custard before the duel begins, dodging blows behind fence posts or chopping your foe in the cuticles when they try to climb up to your ledge. You might get tutted, but if you care more about saving your skin than losing your honour then cast aside any



Can't I Borrow Your Luger?

A neat touch regarding special moves is that some characters have favoured weapons, that enable them to launch doubly brutal and effective attacks unique to that particular combination. In time you'll discover some really impressive stuff – with the right weapons, warriors can perform backflip cuts, hammer spins and pole-vaulting spear jumps among other things – so here's our rundown of the *Bushido* arsenal...

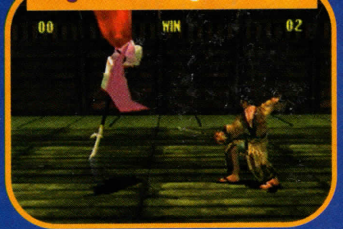
Katana 1.5kg 92.0cm

This is the samurai's sword and fighting spirit – a million steel folds sharpened to slice clean through leather and bone. I'll have one of those, please.

Rapier 0.9kg 75.0cm

Don't block heavy weapons, just feint and dodge until you get an opportunity for that heart-piercing thrust. Suits Kokuren's yellow-streak style of conflict.

Naginata 2.2kg 181.0cm

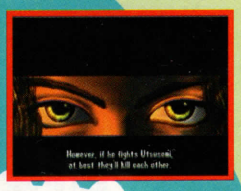


You'll find Mikado is a born spear-maiden, using the haft's length to keep enemies at arm's length and therefore well beyond their most advantageous range.

Hammer 4.5kg 83.5cm

Surprisingly, the upstart kid with the trainers prefers this skull-crusher – although he often falls on his wet rookie nose trying to swing it at his opponent.

Tales of fallen allies, betrayed comrades and crimes against honour accompany the scenes of bloody combat.



lurking shred of dignity and exude villainy on the Flashman scale of swaggering caddishness

One reservation we do have about *Bushido Blade* is that its greatest strength – that sense of authenticity and complexity – also represents its biggest restriction in terms of mass appeal. What you end up with is 'Sim Katana': less a videogame, and more a simulation of traditional Japanese sword fighting that suffers from many of the problems found in other types of sim. To put it bluntly, the painstakingly accurate, delicate tweaks that have gone into simulating ancient Japanese combat have made it (possibly) the most anally retentive, overwhelmingly serious beat-'em-up ever crafted. And because it lacks the pyrotechnic thrills of more mainstream beaties, the only reward it can offer you for your hard work is a private sense of achievement in the fact that you played well. No after hours fun with a group of mates here: this is a remarkably inaccessible title to any player who isn't (a) already excellent at fighting games, and (b) prepared to devote the next couple of years to mastering its intricacies on a daily basis. And while we welcome the emphasis on depth and tactics it boasts over other acclaimed rivals (anybody out there still playing *Tekken*, eh? Eh? Seen every combo in *Soul Blade*, have we?), *Bushido Blade* strolls a

In The Head!

Once you've tired of the infinitely sensible side-on conventional view you can choose to play from the mad and scary first-person perspective.

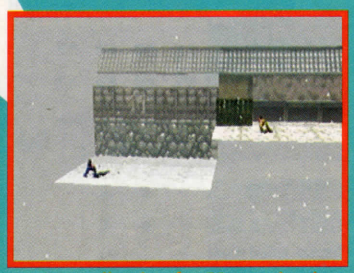
Here you gaze upon your opponent through the eyes of your chosen fighter with all the fear and potential poke-in-the-eye-with-a-sharp-stick thrills that this implies. We've had this kind of thing before (with the likes of *Tekken 2*) but it's never been available as a selectable option from the offset.

There's also a link-up option! This means that you and a mate can play full-screen, head-to-head, and eye-to-eye! It's very tricky, and you can't see what's going on all around you but it feels genuinely life threatening to play. Top stuff.

The little dummy bloke top right shows you your moves.

Go on! Poke him in the eye with your big pointy stick.

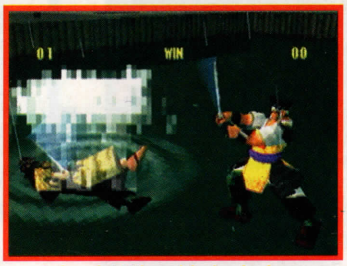
This fight took longer to load than to play.



Even allowing for 3D terrain, the graphics can seem rather poor.

The stories are actually a bit nob, now that we can read the text.

"Likewise. I'm sure I'd remember that shirt if we'd met before."



Sploosh! When blades lock, you hammer the buttons for a push.

Nodachi 1.9kg 119.0cm

This is a larger version of the katana which requires the use of both hands. Utsusemi's whirling b,f+T,T,T,T is possibly the best move in the entire game.

Longsword 1.4kg 79.0cm

Because it's solely a one-handed weapon, stick it in the mitts of Hotarubi and she'll be left free to somersault or counter attack with high stance sidestep blows.

Sabre 1.2kg 72.0cm

The sabre is ideal for those fighters who have a spring in their step. The lightness of the blade makes it far more deadly in the hands of a speedy fighter.

Broadsword 4.1kg 85.0cm

The broadsword is the crusader knight's helm-cracking two-hander, which is definitely best employed by characters who posses the greatest strength.

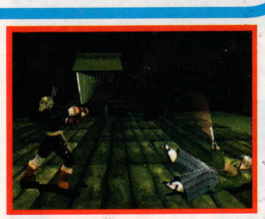
Standing Around

Unlike all other beat-'em-ups in the world, the moves the attack buttons unleash are dependant upon the stance adopted by the fighter at the time. Pressing the left shoulder buttons puts your player through their paces, some slightly squatting, some standing erect. It's all part of the game's complicated learning process, that requires dedication and patience.

A slightly stooping stance gives you a longer range.

Upright allows you brutal vertical head-cleaves.

A sudden pounce from a crouch reaps deathly rewards.



May the force be with you. One of these fighters has taken what looks like a laser gun in the face, (not good).

In replay mode you can watch your demise in all its glory, felled by a kenjutsu warrior in a purple cave...

long way down Anorak Avenue to provide much in the way of appeal. Sure, some of you will fall in love with this from play one and defend its qualities to the bitter end. We know, and we understand. We were really impressed with it here at *PlayStation Power* but it's impossible to recommend it to all of you lot out there when we're pretty sure some of you will find its demanding style of gameplay and attention to detail a tad tiresome.

Bushido Blade is an accomplished creation, that will suit certain gamers' tastes but might get a cool reception from some quarters.

The 'realism' of instant death means that sometimes, after establishing options, choosing your weapon and confronting your enemy, you die before you even get off a single attack. Meet the final boss and beating him with your first press of a button raises a few eyebrows, too. Learning to defend yourself is probably the most demanding area of the game, and you won't see many rallies until you've spent weeks practicing those three-part counter-attacks to millisecond perfection. Pad mashers won't have an easy time, but they can take comfort in the fact that perseverance will ensure the odd fluke win against more experienced players.

Trying to mark this is like trying to mark a complex Napoleonic strategy wargame: you just can't be fair to all types of player. *Bushido Blade*'s appeal would inevitably warrant a 10/10 for a hardcore set of dedicated gamers among you, and if you figure yourself a part of that crowd then you really ought to give it a try because you'll love it. The rest of us play it for the charm of the setting and give up half an hour later, none the wiser as to why we died or where we went wrong. Its an accomplished effort that deserves some serious thought. P

Rain or shine, you've got to get out there and do battle to the death.

These blades are fierce. You'll have someone's eye out before long...

Score

Gameplay

Playability	
Originality	
Lastability	

Graphics

Animation	
Effects	
Presentation	

Sound

Music	
Effects	
Atmosphere	

A deep, serious tactical katana-sim with good ideas aplenty. Shame about its lengthy learning curve and inaccessibility but still a beautifully crafted, technically brilliant beat-'em-up. WILL

PlayStation Power

8

Value £ £ £

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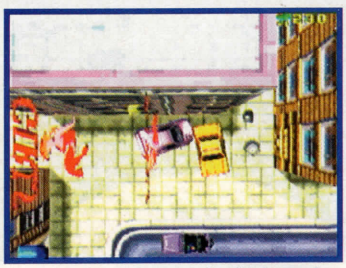
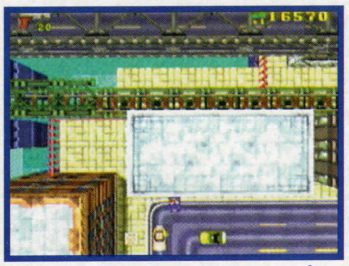


Time for a change of vehicle. Park the taxi and nick the Lamborghini.

Just what is that ugly junk that blocks your view of the cars?



The faster you go, the more of the city you see on-screen.

These barriers mean the bridge is down. Get a fast car and jump it.

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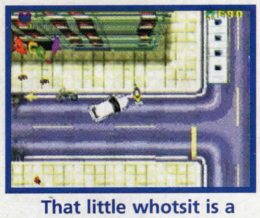
Words: Daniel Griffiths

Grand Thef

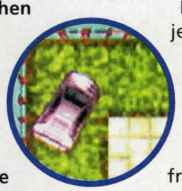
Stop! Drive into the river and you're dead.



That little whotsit is a motorbike. Hmm.

When do looks cease to mean as much as personality? When will you go for a car that has plenty of room in the back rather than one which looks fabulous and goes like dung off a stick? When will you shirk that burger and fries in favour of a far healthier salade niçoise with vinaigrette dressing? In short, how good does a game have to be before you stop noticing that it looks bloody awful.

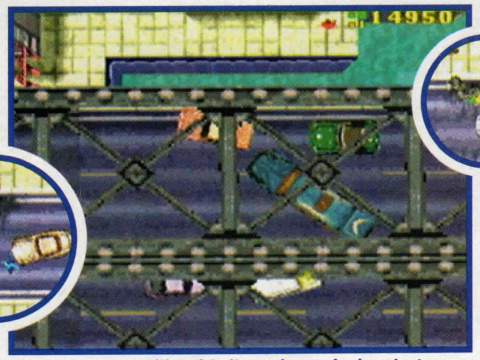
Grand Theft Auto is the class moose, the town bike, the office boiler. It kisses like your gran and cooks like a dinner lady. And, amazingly, its developers DMA, famous for creating *Lemmings* then resting on their laurels since, have spent three years working on it! And yet it looks awful! The lazy gets!



First of all *GTA* is jerky. Really jerky. A sub-20 fps frame rate is the kiss of death for a PlayStation game. Wake up! When you move quickly the game doesn't speed up as such but drop more and more frames of animation to give the effect that you're moving faster. It's a Dave Lee Travesty. Secondly it's super-chunky. It's blocky, ugly – made of Lego. The myriad of cars and characters roaming around never look better than badly drawn toys or a splat of roughly-hewn pixels. They've simply stuck the PC version of the game (smooth, hi-res) through the PlayStation-ising machine and slapped the output on the shelves. These blokes are not PlayStation programmers, despite what they say down the pub. If they couldn't get more frames per second out of the lo-res, graphically turgid *GTA* then we say sack the lot of them. *GTA* looks shabby when, in this day and age, it clearly needn't be.

It's about now that we ought to address the game's subject matter. Much has been made of the horrible dealings contained therein: drug dealing, assassinations, joy riding, terrorist bombings, flattening harmless hari krishnas with a bus. On paper it's like some kind of 'this'll never get published' joke. The real joke is that the graphics are so lacking

Flatten folk and ambulances leave the stations in the cities to attend to the ill and injured.



Driving cars like this limo through the city's narrow crowded streets is a bloody nightmare.

It's the pigs! Scarper before he nabs you!

Making Money

Here's how the game works in a typical mission. Do the job, get your cash, then have a stab at another.

You've got to pick up a truck containing a bomb and deliver it.

Follow the arrow and it'll lead you to this parked up truck.

Target dead ahead. Park up the truck and go to pick up your cash.

Upon arriving you spot you're mate's lawyer and must follow him.

Unfortunately he leads you to a gang who shoot you to pieces. Damn.

t Auto

that you simply can't take it's supposedly gran-scaring content seriously. Sure, this scotches any objections about the violence and unpleasantness contained therein (it simply doesn't look anything like it's supposed to) but it also makes the whole dodgy plot pointless. Why bother with 'drug deals' when it just involves a tiny blocky man running over a five-pixel suitcase which magically disappears? Press Square to remove a tiny man from his tiny car then drive away in it – actual bodily harm and car theft or just a mess of pixels bumping into each other?

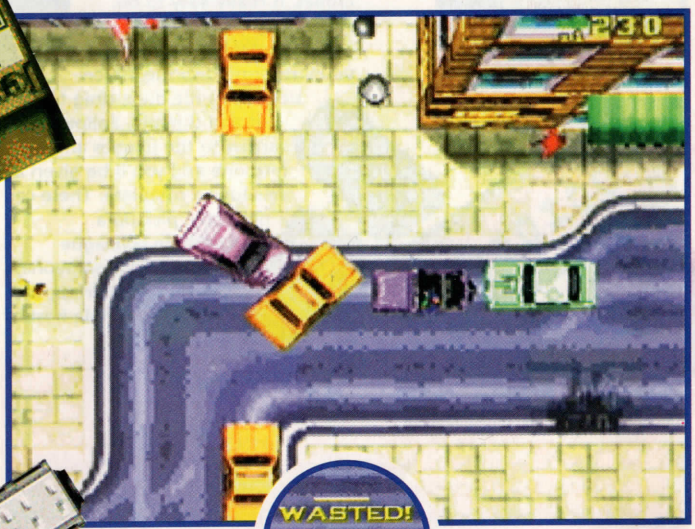
The other *GTA* shouty point concerns the revolutionary top-down view which, as it pans vertically upwards, shows you much of the surrounding streets. Revolutionary my hat. It's just like all those ancient top-down driving games where you can't see the corners coming. Folk far cleverer than PlayStation *GTA*'s programmers invented 3D graphics so we wouldn't have to put up with top-down any more. As you drive faster sure, the camera pans out, however corners still surprise you and you'll ricochet into other traffic every few seconds. You're actually better off tootling about in a van rather than one of the sleek sports cars on offer because that way you're not stupidly crashing or losing sight of your car behind buildings as you round corners and the camera lazily floats on by. And what's with that blocky, view-obscuring junk across the streets? *What is it*? Pipes? Wires? *Why*? And road signs. Thanks to being vertical and, as in real life, thin poles, they are practically invisible. One moment your speeding down the pavement (thereby avoiding the bloody annoying traffic) the next you're motionless as you hit the invisible obstacle, forcing you into one of *GTA*'s terminally fiddly 15 point turns. (Exactly why is it that when you reverse you always press the wrong direction button?). And the yellow guide arrow (which directs you to your next target) becomes illegible as it drifts over yellowy pavements and scenery. And why does everything look so *washed out*? And... oh never mind.

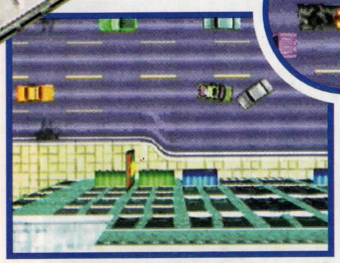
The real joke is that the graphics are so lacking that you simply can't take any of it's supposedly gran-scaring content seriously

So why does *GTA* still score eight out of ten? Because once you forgive it its flaws, grow tired of moaning about the jerky frame rate, and (very nearly) master the art of not driving like a drunkard there's a big, fat, involving and difficult game beneath. You play one of eight characters and begin the game, skint, weaponless and

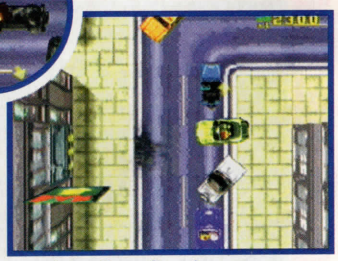
If you ever like the look of another car, just ram and nick it.

As you crash the cars become more dented and bashed.



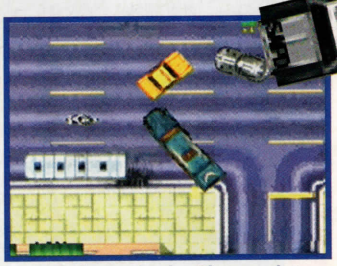


Tired of looking at tiny cars yet? Yes, it is a bit samey isn't it?



The yellow direction arrow keeps you on the right track.

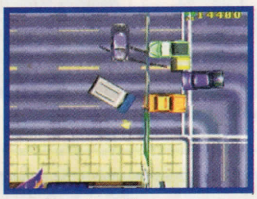
The police car is the coolest car to swipe.



Mind your backs. Three point turns are a tad awkward.

You've just knocked that bloke off his bike.

Mind the vegetation! Trees are impassable.



The shoulder buttons allow you to skid.

Paging Mr Murderer...

In addition to the missions picked up from phones, your pager will beep and appear top left from time to time with another sub-mission for you. These are essentially bonus jobs paying supplementary cash and, due to you more often than not being in the midst of another when they go beep, you'll have to find your own way there 'cos your direction arrow will be otherwise employed. This means you'll need intimate knowledge of the city streets to find the places and targets it mentions – a real pain in the bum if you're after the last few points to move onto the next stage and don't know your way around yet.

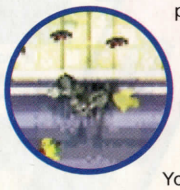
You can be directed to a special car that wants stealing...

... or perhaps you could give a hoodlum a lift across town...

... or murder your boss' wife. Yes, it really is that kind of game.

motor-free but can pick up ammo from crates on the street and, as you are no doubt aware, steal passing motors. This, the most frequently committed of all *GTA*'s crimes, is really easy to do. Just run up to a car and press the steal car button and you'll run round to the drivers side, open the door, drag him out and climb in. Follow the arrow to the phones and run into one and you'll be given a mission to complete. These can be simple pick up a car/robbing colleague deliver job, kill someone, deliver bomb/drugs, etc. There's a whole host of illegalities on offer, hence the game's 18 certificate and minor prissy press outrage. Once you're equipped with a purpose you follow the yellow direction arrow (it always tells you where to go next) to your target. Unhappy with your ride? You can steal another tastier looking motor at any point. Bored? You can drive on the pavement and run folk over. Want to shoot someone? You can climb out of your car and run around firing little, early TV game-style blocks at the weeny folk scuttling away from you. Make contact and they're replaced by a small spat of jam. When you've had enough arsing around and actually reach your destination you're given the next stage of the mission. The stolen car you've located needs taking to the docks. The bank robber wants taking to his hideout. The bomb needs depositing by a building. Bad things need doing. Etc. Each mission has four or five stages (see box earlier) and when all the facets have been sorted (folk are either dead or pacified) you're directed back to the phones for another, similarly telescopic, mission.

The missions are interesting and difficult. You'll soon learn that you ought to completely flatten the



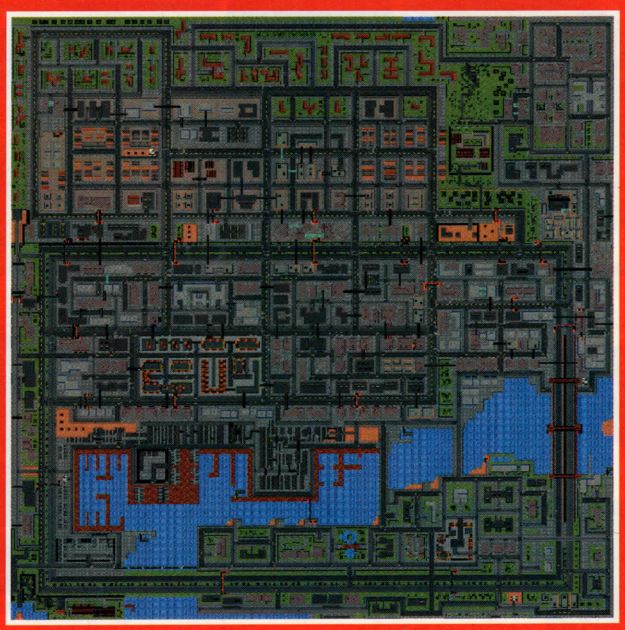
Go to the phones to be given different missions from the bosses.

Looks like the game's up here. You'll never escape in that bus.

When you hit another car they just stop stupidly meaning that you have to barge them out of the way. Gah!

Sim Cities

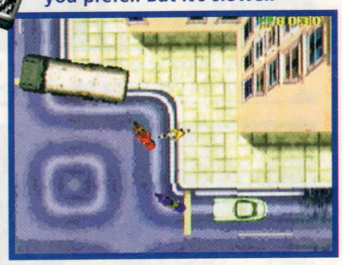
Three different cities doesn't sound like a lot but when you take into account the size of the things, the fact that there are a total of 200 missions in the game and the intense difficulty in places, you've a game that'll last you ages.



biker gang before you get out of your car for example, or that you shouldn't drive into an area of intense gunfire in a car that you've already knocked seven shades of shine out of on the way (it'll explode with you in it, see). While there is a knack to cracking most missions you'll still be frequently scuppered by the unwieldy controls and irritating cross town traffic. It's all thanks to the games vast AI routines which drive around the hundreds of cars in the game, resulting in that poor frame rate. Sure enough, when you follow a car it drives around sensibly. Stopping for other cars and behaving 'realistically' but we say big fat hairy deal. As long as the cars on and immediately off-screen don't do anything stupid we don't give a monkeys what's going on miles away. We can't see it, see? It won't affect the game. IT'S NOT IMPORTANT. Very clever, but WE DON'T CARE. More frames per second please. Tsk.

The game's AI really kicks in when you've done a number of bad things however. Suddenly the cops'll start paying attention, giving chase occasionally. After the mundanity of just pootling about, it's refreshingly exciting. Ram a few more cars or flatten some more pedestrians and the rozzers turn up in increasing numbers, not only giving chase but blocking roads and opening fire. Gripping stuff, so it's a shame that the whole gun fight aspect of the game is flawed. It's impossible to aim with any degree of accuracy and one in-coming, unavoidably fast shot will kill you outright. So, rather than getting into exciting gun battles with the many different weapons on offer, it's far more sensible to just drive away from or over your angry attackers instead.

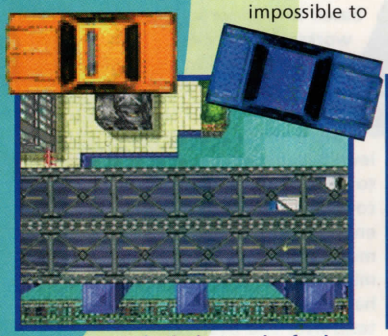
You can get around on foot if you prefer. But it's slower.



Occasionally the scenery will block your view. Irritating eh?

Just do what you like. You can even nick the ambulance if you want.

Get shot or be inside a destroyed car and you'll loose a life.



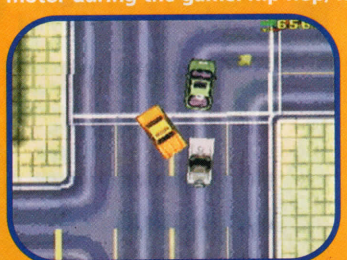
The game looks better the further out the camera gets. Odd that.

The larger roads allow you to whizz across the city quickly.

Best take it easy to make it around winding narrow bends.

Music Please

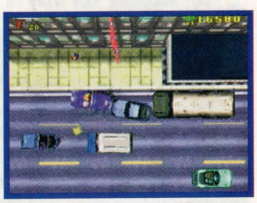
One of the best features of *GTA* (and one that is impossible to demonstrate via the medium of paper and print) is its music. It's the game soundtrack of the year. Each vehicle you nick has a different tape playing on its stereo so you're cruelly exposed to an amazingly diverse range of music as you leap from motor to motor during the game. Hip Hop, House, Country and Western, Rock, Folk it's all here and it's all superb.



Taxi's usually have the radio on. A mish-mash of jingles and tunes.

High performance numbers have banging sub-Prodigy big beat.

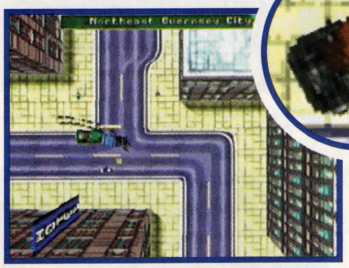
And the lowly pick-ups have a geetar-pickin' C&W tape on.



Yet another traffic jam in th big city.

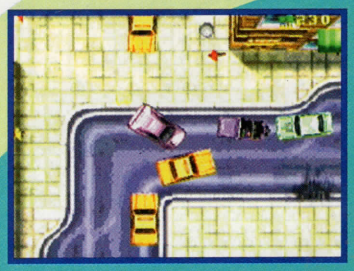
Just because the CPU cars drive sensibly...

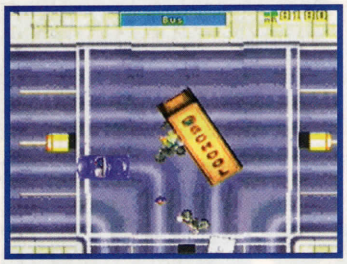
I'd nick that Beast GTS over the too-fast-to-manoeuvre bike.

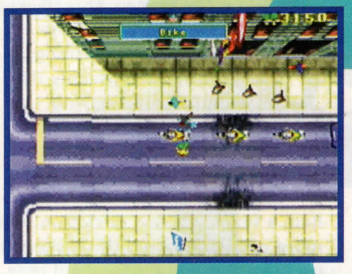


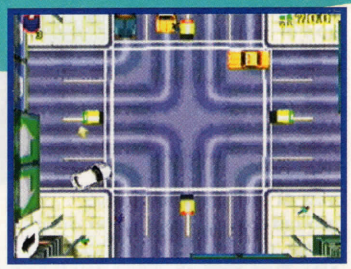
If only there was some way of driving without crashing all the time! No sooner do you get a bit of speed up than you're careering into a wall.

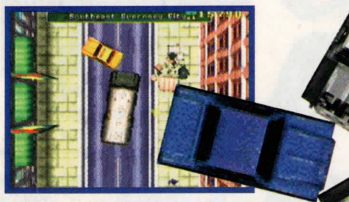
Shot dead on your way to pick up another mission. Cruel.

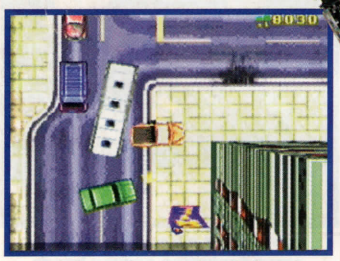












Driving a bus is a laugh for about ten seconds 'cos they're mup.

That yellow box is a traffic light suspended above the road. Ahh.

Interestingly it's possible to run out of missions and not be allowed to progress. Rather than following the more familiar mission-based form of progression, *GTA* works on an ancient points based system. You must earn a set sum of money (points basically) to progress to each level of which there are six, two per city. Each level has around ten separate missions to complete but it's possible to complete them and still not have enough money to progress, so if you mess up some of the better paid missions then you'll be punished by having to perform boring, low scoring tasks over and over again: run down some pedestrians, steal some cars, sell them at the docks. In the end you'll be allowed to progress but you'll be driven quite mad in the process.

So let's return to that eight out of ten score. *GTA* is gameplay beating graphics. Its John Merrick proving that he isn't, in fact, an elephant. It's a triumph of ingenuity and design over the adversities of a console with only 2Mb of RAM and a programming team more at home tweaking £2000+ graphically accelerated PCs. There is so much to do here and such variety on offer that it'll last you ages. A fair amount of imagination is needed to make up for the (one last time) scabby graphics but the freedom available, the scope to innovate and play the game how you want and the simplistic fun to be gained from committing crimes even the most delinquent of folk could only dream of render *GTA* a slightly tarnished triumph.

Score

Gameplay

- Playability
- Originality
- Lastability

Graphics

- Animation
- Effects
- Presentation

Sound

- Music
- Effects
- Atmosphere

Three years in the making, yet it looks like it was boshed off in a week. *GTA*'s assets lie beneath its Amiga-crusty exterior in its freeform level structure, lasting challenge and shocking subject matter. DANIEL

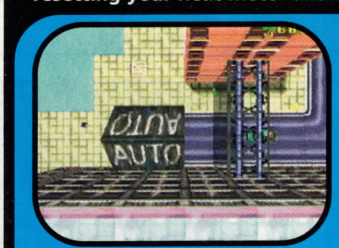
PSM

8

Value £ £ £

Paintshop Pro

If the cops are giving you too much hassle (police hostility is measured in cops heads in a bar at the top of the screen) you can take your stolen motor to one of the autoshops dotted about each city and have it resprayed for a small some, resetting your heat meter and allowing you to go unhindered.



One minute it's blue and the cops are on your tail...

... the next it's red and you can go about your business.

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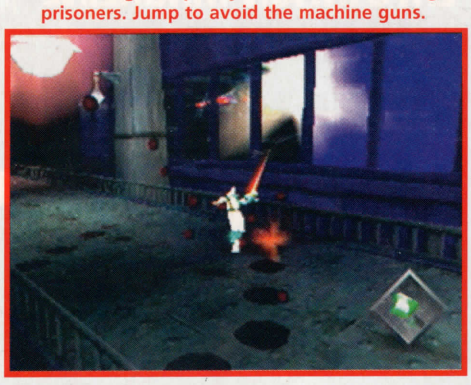
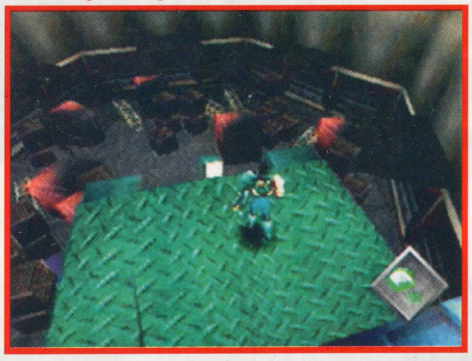
There's a gunship on your ass, and it's taking no prisoners. Jump to avoid the machine guns.



A dozen enemies have their laser sights on you. Best get firing then, unless death interests you.



Narrow corridor, big fiery weapons. Not a great combination. Again, you should fire back.

From: ASC Games
Available: Late February
£44.99

1 Player

Memory Card

Analogue Controller

Words: Will Groves

One

Flash, bang, wallop, what a picture. Sorry.

Just a thought before we kick off. If the developers decide to do a follow up to *One*, will it be called *One 2*, or simply *Two*? It's a minor point but one worth considering, because once this incredible new shoot-'em-up has been bought, played and finished, gamers are going to be screaming out for a sequel. Allow us to explain why.

As we all know, anyone who doesn't set their action game in the future is liable to be arrested, for a futuristic plot is now required by law. In the case of *One*, it is 40 years in the future. It is here though, that the plot takes a turn for the less mundane. You are John Cain and at the start of the game you awake with your mind wiped and, most disturbingly, your left arm replaced by a mechanical limb housing an array of destructive weaponry. How you got here is a mystery, and who changed your physical appearance is also unknown. But one thing is certain, the mechanical attack craft and enemies that are instantly attacking you are real enough so your only option is to run like a greasy weasel and propel yourself through the five levels of the game as you try to uncover the secrets of your past.

So, having been instilled with a sense of extreme paranoia by the plot, it's time to experience the extremely paranoiac, everyone's-out-to-get-you gameplay. The first thing to be stated is that this is one of the most exhausting and manic shooters we have ever experienced. Right from the off you are assailed on all sides by enemies, snipers, missiles, gunships, machine gun fire – every type of death-dealing machinery imaginable is having a pop at you and having played it through to the very end, it's hard to recall a single moment when

This level is full of tricky jumps, and it's against the clock. Nasty.

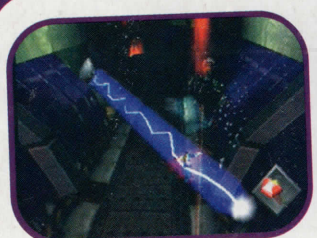
These robots get airlifted in, then proceed to stove your head in.

Ooh, that gives you nasty little laser burns on the buttocks.

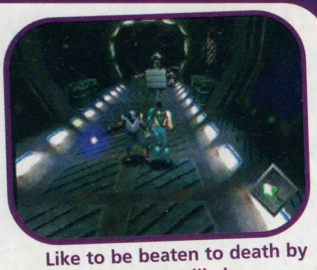
Big strong robot. Shoot the cranes overhead to crush him. Not easy.

Pleased To Beat You

As the game is, to all intents and purposes, mind-bendingly simple (storm through each level shooting and killing everything in sight) the programmers have cleverly lobbed in a vast array of different baddies for you to happily kick the crud out of, just to keep things a bit more interesting...



Fancy taking on a large laser turret? Not really, thanks.



Like to be beaten to death by this bruiser. Not likely.

Or perhaps quadruple gunfire is your preferred death.

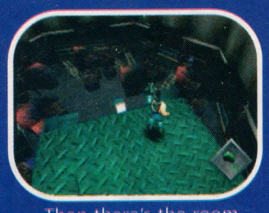
Laser sights? Hardly fair is it? But then life rarely is.

A Grand Day Out

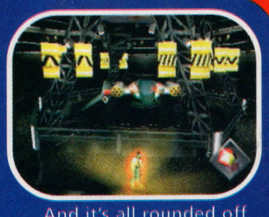
There's an awful lot to see in *One*. Each level contains several distinct sections, each of which will present you with new challenges. Here's a run though of level one, just to give you an idea of the sort of thing to expect in this shoot-'em-up fest...

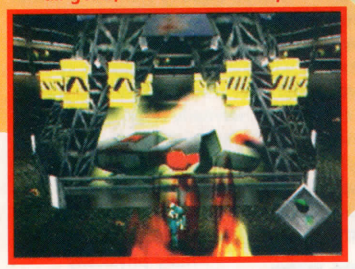
Things start gently, with a missile attack. AARGH!

Followed swiftly by some collapsing floors.


Then there's the room full of enemy troops.

Followed by this platform-related hell.


And it's all rounded off with a nice big Boss.


Shoot these girders. When they're all gone, the Boss blows up.

Nothing to say about this except that as you can see, it's mayhem.

More scenes of devastation. It really is quite mind-blowing.

Oh dear, fallen debris blocks your way. Do a double jump here.

we were able to take even the tiniest of breathers.

The only minor quibble with the whole game, and one that we'll get out of the way right now, is that at times, it relies a little too heavily on over-long sections of tricky jumps. This, for a short while, takes the game away from its basic role as an all-out shooter and into the realms of dodgy platforming. The game camera moves around in a very impressive cinematic style, but this can make judging your position above a platform below unnecessarily troublesome. Fortunately a small amount of control over the camera is allowed (you can zoom in and out a bit). Presumably these platform elements are supposed to add another facet to the gameplay, but *One* is every inch a classic shooter so these tiresome little sections detract from the fun a bit. They are only a very minor irritant though and when you look at the whole picture, they don't ruin what is (and we might as well give the game away now) an absolutely stunning piece of work.

There are five levels in all and for a more in-depth look at a typical level's structure, take a look at the A Grand Day Out box. In short though, you can expect to be fleeing from a massive assault, clearing a room of dozens of enemies, scaling the walls using moving and collapsing platforms (while being assaulted all the while) and ultimately coming face to face with a truly gargantuan end-of-

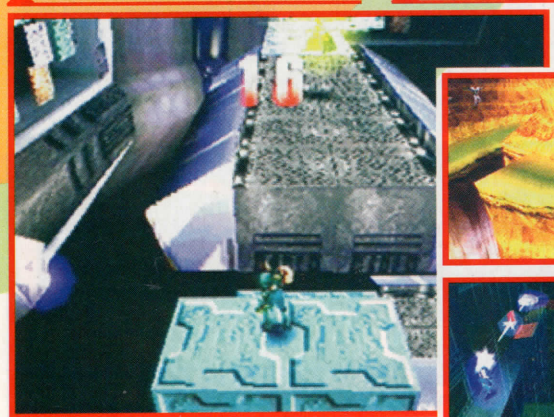
Beware of falling boulders on this bit.

Would you believe the game hardly ever slows down. Amazing.

A precarious situation to say the least. Use the D-pad for these bits.

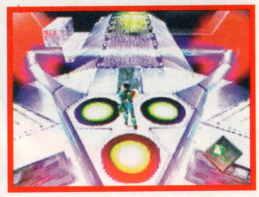
That thing in the foreground is a huge laser-firing Boss. Jump.

The neon lighting is very effective.



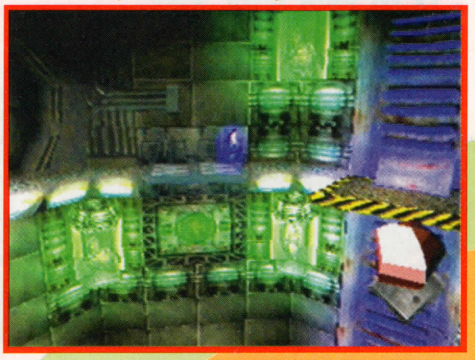
This level's full of moving and collapsing platforms. It's hard to tell which is which.

Watch out for the trains that hurtle past in this level. A flat hero is no hero at all.

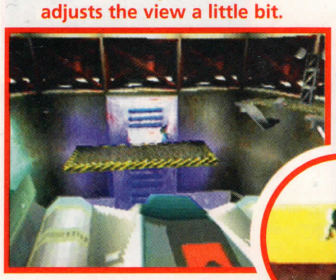

Colourful isn't it? But pleasant it is not.

Shoot this wall to open up a secret section with power-ups in it. It not all that useful though.

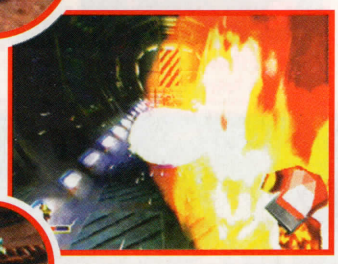
Ah, some bracing, clean country air at last. But the outdoors is no less deadly than the city.

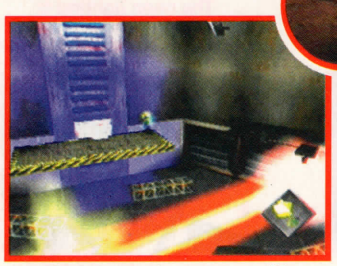

Be careful with those double jumps. You don't want to plummet now do you? Oh no.

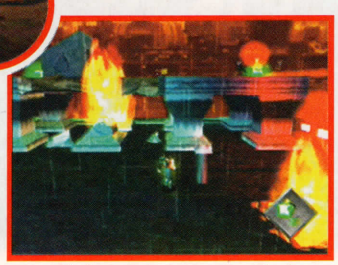
A rare close-up shot of your character. He looks a bit miserable doesn't he? Something to do with being gunned down at every turn perhaps.


A bit far away. The L2 button adjusts the view a little bit.

Another vertigo-inducing shot of the skyscraper level.




Oh no, more lasers. Jump like your life depends on it (it does).


A fighter takes out the platform with a missile. Steer clear.

level boss. Standard stuff for any solid classic-style shoot-'em-up and this alone would make it a damn good play. But *One* differs from most blasters in the same way that the old SNES game *Super Probotector* differed from most shooters. It's the high level of ingenuity and the variety crammed within the constraints of the game style that make it shine. Every new section holds a surprise and requires some thought. Every boss is extremely different and, like old *Super Probotector*, there are many occasions upon which you will literally jump out of your skin. Whether it's through the sheer weight of opposition the game chucks at you, or the appearance of a terrifying enemy, there are shocks around every corner.

But it's not just the content of the game that illustrates the ingenuity of its designers. The control system is also incredibly well implemented. For a start the hero can be moved around the 3D environment using either standard or analogue control. Now whether it was intentional or not, there are areas in the game that are better tackled with the normal D-pad (tricky jumps and narrow walkways being two examples) and others in which analogue control is superior. Thankfully, the whole game can be tackled equally well using either method alone, but having the choice and being able to switch between the two at will is interesting. Better still is your characters range of moves. Shoot-'em-ups are normally restricted to running, jumping and firing. In *One* your character can run (at varying speeds thanks to the analogue controller), jump, somersault, crouch, strafe, dive, fire, lock and fire and finally physically attack an enemy with your bare hands when up close. The usefulness of some of these moves is questionable, and you certainly don't need all of them to get through the game, but double jumps, strafing, physical attacks and lock-and-fire definitely come into their own at one time or another.

> **You can run, jump, somersault, crouch, strafe, dive, fire, lock and fire and physically attack an enemy with your bare hands up close**

And what of power-ups? Surely part of the staple diet of any blaster? Oddly *One* isn't big on power-ups, but it makes up for the lack of collectables with a snazzy, original weapon system. There are a few weapons to be had – a laser, missiles and a flame-thrower – but the emphasis is on your character's rage meter which fluctuates according to your performance, and radically alters your destructive capabilities. The

Smash It Up!

At times the way ahead may appear blocked: an impossible jump lies ahead or a whopping rock blocks your crevice. Here *One*'s top quality interaction with the scenery comes into play.

Oh no! A dead end. But what if you shoot that huge sign?

Ah ha, it falls down providing a handy way to proceed. Smart.

Any idea what's going on here? We haven't. And we were playing.

Liar, liar pants (and entire building) on fire. It's mad.

Whoops, you've been targetted. Move very quickly indeed.

The trick throughout the game is to keep moving no matter what.

It's All The Rage

***One* uses a unique Rage meter instead of a power bar (or power-ups for that matter). The blob you see below is made up of segments. Each time you take a hit you lose a segment and if you lose all the segments you're stuffed. You earn more rage by destroying more stuff and killing more enemies and, as your rage increases, so does your weapon's power and lock-on ability, enabling you to blow up yet more stuff! As the Rage meter increases it changes colour and here's what the colours mean:**

A weedy standard green weapon. Shoot things.

Better. The yellow stage is more powerful.

And once you're on red, you're really cooking.

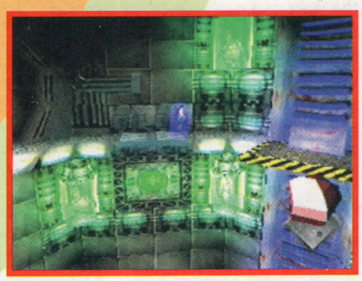
Full power. Hit the smart bomb. BOOOOM!

If all else fails, hit the enemy. Quite effective.

rage meter is fully explained in the It's All The Rage boxout, but to fill you in a bit there's a floating blob in the corner of the screen made up of several segments. Each time you get hit, a segment disappears. Lose all the segments and you die. However, by killing stuff and generally doing well you can build up the segments and gradually build up the strength of your weapons. It's a great device because it changes the pace of play. For example, with a fully powered weapon you might just plough through a section largely ignoring the enemies. Next time, however, due to a mishap you might be low on energy so you'll take time to run around picking off all the enemies to get powered back up.

Before we wrap this review up, we'd better mention the graphics. Though the gameplay is the single most important feature of any game, it has to be said that in the case of *One*, superb gameplay is backed up admirably by some stunning visuals. Quite how it has been achieved we don't know, but at the most action-packed moments, the screen is stuffed with realtime-lit polygons all hurtling about in a super-smooth fashion. It's possible to witness scores of enemies, huge amounts of detail and massive explosions all shifting around at the same time and it's only at the very busiest moments that things ever slow down... and even then only slightly. The screenshots you see here should convey part of the atmosphere, but you really do have to see it moving to get a true sense of the overwhelming amount of action going on.

Summing up a game like *One* is easy. All we have to do is reach up and take our copy of The Reviewer's Cliche Thesaurus and randomly pluck phrases from it. 'A Classic', 'Must Buy', 'Stunning', 'Graphical Tour De Force' simply pick a page and a phrase and it fits. The best part is that the PlayStation has been starved of decent shoot-'em-ups. Sure, there are plenty of true 3D shooters in the *Doom* mould, but this is a classic-style blaster and amazingly, this classic feel has been worked into a startlingly good 3D engine. Quite simply a terrific game that we heartily recommend. P



Yes, well, this clearly isn't a good thing. This game never lets up.

Watch out for the squid that try to break the glass and drown you.

Score

Gameplay

Playability	5
Originality	3
Lastability	3

Graphics

Animation	4
Effects	5
Presentation	3

Sound

Music	3
Effects	4
Atmosphere	4

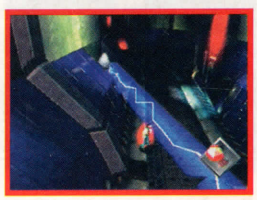
A few dodgy platforming sections, but that aside, *One* is a fantastically good-looking, hard-playing, 3D blaster with classic shoot-'em-up gameplay. Your head will be left reeling from it all. WILL

Official PlayStation Power

9

Value £ £ £ £

Don't fall off the edge, it's a long way down.


Shoot the turret to end this madness. Jeez!

More fire, more ways to die. Will it never end?

Thank God, checkpoint. Aother section over.

Transformers! (Anteaters In Disguise...)

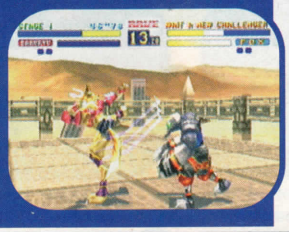
***Bloody Roar*'s unique selling point, as you might have gathered by now, is its characters' ability to change from human to animal form. Here's a rundown of each characters alter ego.**

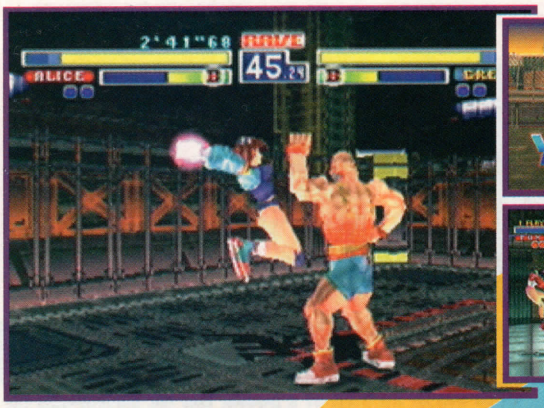
Alice

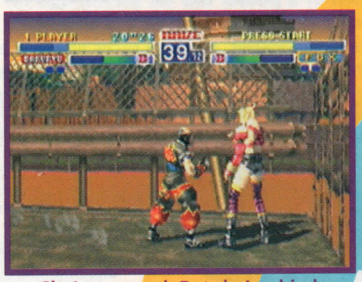
Our favourite character. She's dead fast, agile and powerful. In her rabbit form she can perform some brilliant thumping moves. A top lass all round.

Bakuryu

Bakuryu can change into an ant-eater. Or it could be a rat, we're not sure. Either way he has massive claws and s a result can perform some vile slashes.







She's cornered. But she's a big lass so I think I'll back off, sharpish.

Greg's ape form does a downward swiping move but misses. Dolt!

From: Virgin
Available: Early February
£39.99
1-2 Players
Memory Card

Words: Sean Atkins

Bloody Roar

Bakuryu in the middle of a transformation.

It's true that the amount of 3D polygonal games that came out when the PlayStation first appeared was ridiculous. Even more ridiculous was that apart from the *Tekkens* and *Toshindens* of this world, the vast majority of the rest were extremely poor. But for a while now, developers have left the beat-'em-up alone. This fortunately means that when one does come out, like HudsonSoft's ***Bloody Roar*, it turns out to be a polished, well-thought out product rather than a shoddy cash-in on a trend.**

However, there are still an awful lot of beat-'em-ups available and still the need to differentiate your product from everyone else's. *Soul Edge*, as we all know, did this with weapons. *Bloody Roar* does it with animals (don't be disgusting). There are eight characters at the start and each has his or her own animalistic alter-ego. We've scattered information about these characters around the review but it wouldn't do any harm to highlight a couple. Mitsuko, for example, can turn himself into a boar, while the fantastically agile Alice can become a human-sized rabbit. But what's the point? The point is that the animal characters have different moves to the human ones and as a result, the flavour of the combat shifts throughout the bouts as each player switches back and forth between human and beast characters. As you play the game performing attacks and, indeed, being on the receiving end of them, an energy bar builds up. When it's at full strength it's then that you can hit the transform button and become your beastly alter-

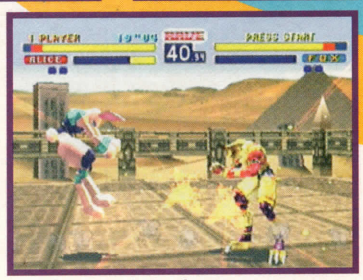
Fox

Fox is a girl, well, a lady, yes, a foxy lady. She's tall and strong and while she's not as quick as Alice, she's more powerful. Her Fox alter-ego is also a slasher.

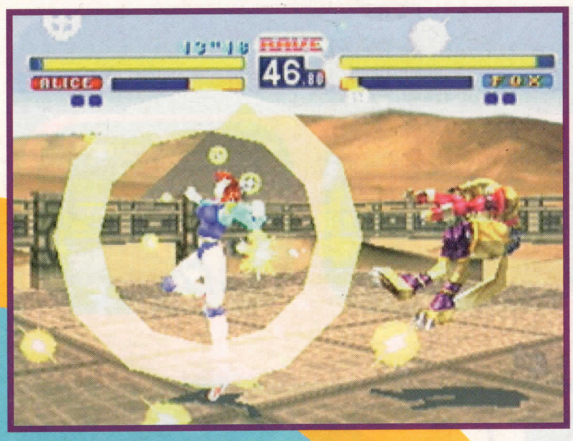
Gado

Gado can change into a lion. He's good at kicking in his human form, but he ain't too quick. In his lion form, he has some good stamping moves though.

Alice is unbeatable. Well, not really, but she's pretty smart.



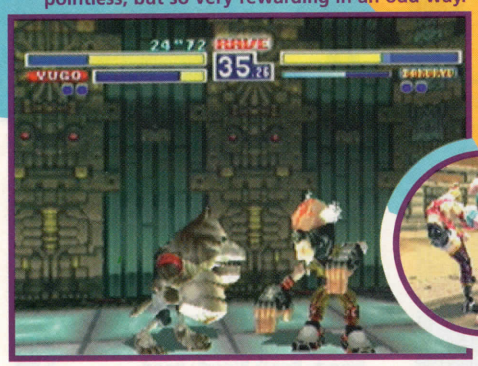
The scenery is almost as pretty as the characters themselves.



It's the cute 'n' cuddly Kids mode. All very pointless, but so very rewarding in an odd way.

Alice's triple spinning uppercut. It's a very flash manoeuvre by anyone's standards.

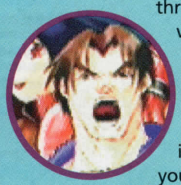
The Big Head mode again. That bloke on the right looks well hard like this. Look at his neck.



ego. There's also a Rave feature available in Beast mode which enhances your attacking abilities even further still.

So two characters in one means twice as many moves as other 3D beat-'em-up, yes? No, because unlike the *Tekken* games, which used all four buttons for left and right limb attacks, *Bloody Roar* uses only two buttons – one for kicking and one for punching. This is initially worrying, until you realise that even with only two buttons the characters have at least twelve basic moves even in their human form, and that's before you even begin to explore the subtleties of the Beast mode.

In truth, *Tekken 2* is the much more complex and rewarding game, but like *Soul Blade*, *Bloody Roar*'s simplicity and different approach to things make it a thoroughly fresh and rewarding experience. For a start the moves range from functional to fantastical with characters slashing, biting and slamming their opponents in a brilliantly ferocious manner – it's even possible to find yourself being violently spun around and thrown right across the arena. And while we're on the subject of attacks, not only is the Beast mode very different to your human form, you can also use the transformation process itself as a weapon. Whenever you change from human to animal form you do so in a huge flash of pyrotechnics. If an opponent is close to you, the blast catches him unawares and sends him reeling backwards. While playing the game, a particular favourite was a double towards tap to initiate a charge then a transformation just as our character ploughed into the opponent. Spectacular and effective. And when you get bored of such antics (which, incidentally, you won't for a very long time) there's plenty of other meat to get your teeth/fangs/tusks into. Eight difficulty levels will keep you going for some time, but after playing through the game eight times you might be after a little more. If so, simply stroll on over to options and there's a wealth of interesting stuff to play with. On the cosmetic side you can select the Kids mode giving you very pleasing little cute 'n' cuddly animals as opposed to the standard big bruisers. Or alternatively, try the Big Head mode which is again interesting but frankly a bit disturbing.



You can view a wealth of artwork in the game.

Now that looks bloody painful. Or is it a transformation going on?

What a lovely young lass. All a bit pervy this Japanese stuff.

Greg is the comedy character of the bunch. He has a big hat, but oddly, when he transforms, he drops it like a nork. His ape form is capable of a devastating grab.

Greg

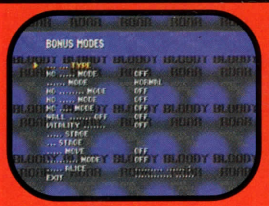
Long's a bit of a professional. Look at his fancy clothes. He's also a bit poncey. His sleek tiger form is OK but it's all claw slashing really.

Long

Bloody More!

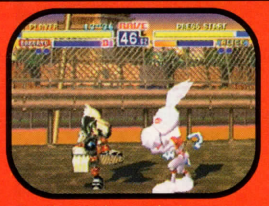
You're unlikely to get bored by the standard bouts, but if you eventually do, there's plenty more in the game to keep your interest. Take a look at the five shining examples below to see why *Bloody Roar* is a shockingly competent and long-lasting punch up...

Watch mode. You just watch CPU bouts. Odd.



Secret options. Beat the game to access them.

Big Head Mode. And how silly they look.


The Kids mode is even more odd. But fun.

How about Survival Mode or Time Attack?

Mitsuko

Mitsuko is, we think, a woman, but a very butch one. Hence, in human form she's a tad slow although if she lands a hit you'll know it. Her Boar form is a bore.

If I met a person who could turn into an animal I'd run a mile...

Yugo

Not a cheap car, but an athletic fighter who happens to be able to turn into a wolf. He's doing a nice barge in the shot below and is good with his claws too.

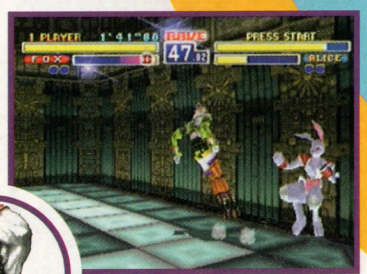
... unless it was a cute fluffy animal like a vole, or a gerbil.

These two are having a right old to-do aren't they? They should learn to relax a little. Maybe drink some herbal tea and light a scented candle.

Finally, there's a special options menu featuring over a dozen options which, at the start of the game are empty and frustratingly unselectable. As you play through the game and notch up the victories these options gradually become available, adding yet more longevity to game that, in Vs mode at least, will keep you playing for many, many moons already.

So where does the game sit in the great hall of 3D beat-'em-up fame? Shockingly, it's right up there with the best. The rendered intro in the game is a bit poor frankly, and when you first see it you think "Oh dear, crap wannabe *Soul Blade/Tekken* effort", and the presentation and general look of the game is a bit tacky, but this is no half-hearted cop out. As we've said already, *Tekken 2* is still the best, but *Bloody Roar*, like *Soul Blade* can proudly stand alongside (albeit stooped slightly) as a sort of ambassador for variety. *Bloody Roar*? Bloody good.

"As we've said *Tekken 2* is still the best but *Bloody Roar*, like *Soul Blade*, can proudly stand alongside (albeit stooped slightly)"



For God's sake man, turn into a beast before he hammers you.

Score

Gameplay

- Playability
- Originality
- Lastability

Graphics

- Animation
- Effects
- Presentation

Sound

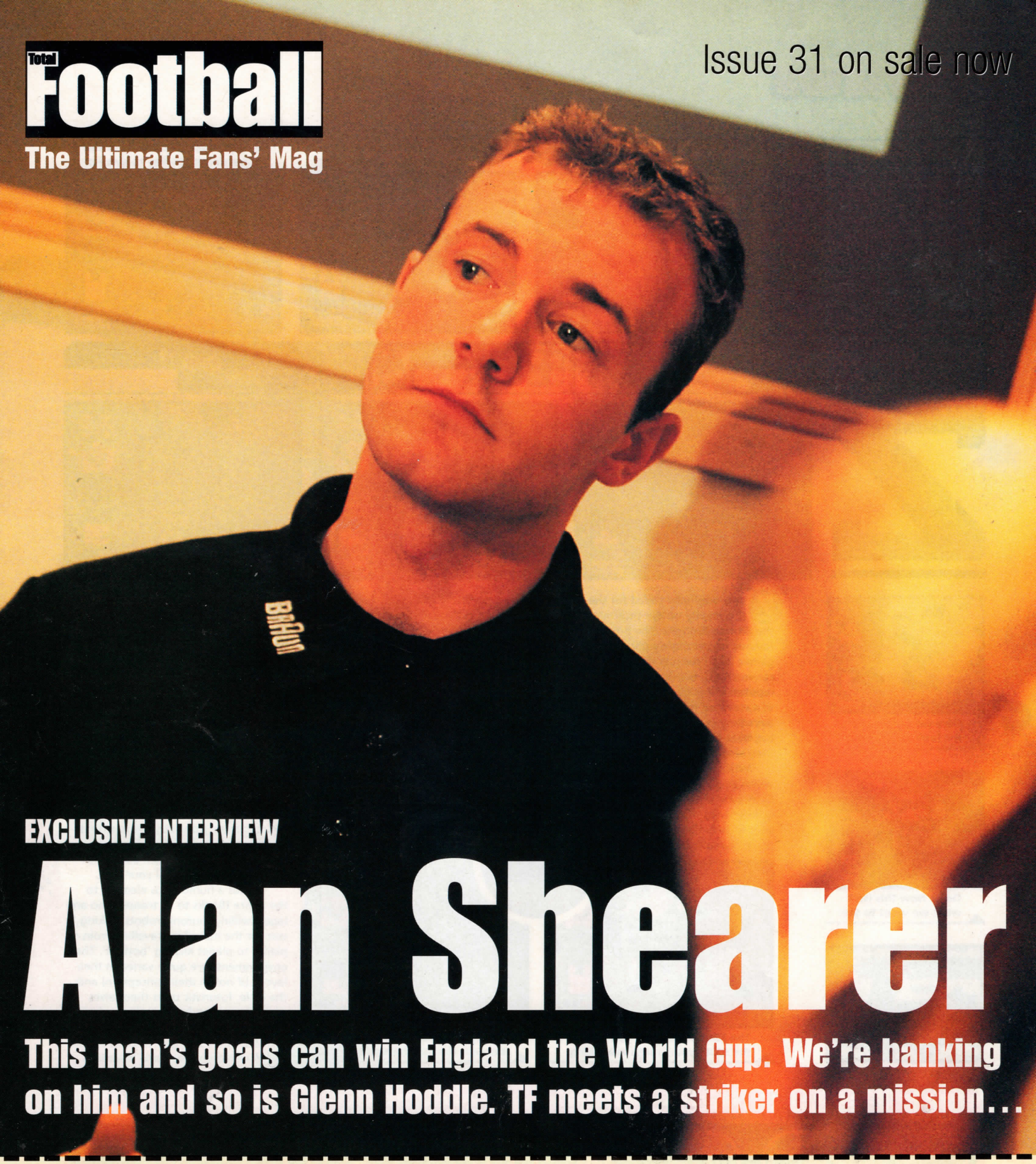
- Music
- Effects
- Atmosphere

This is an absolutely top notch beat-'em-up. The simple two button system works a treat and the animal transformations are great fun. Another new slant on the beat-'em-up and a hugely playable one. SEAN

Power

8

Value £ £ £



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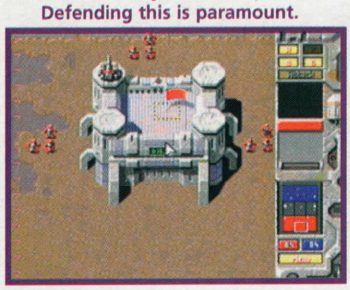
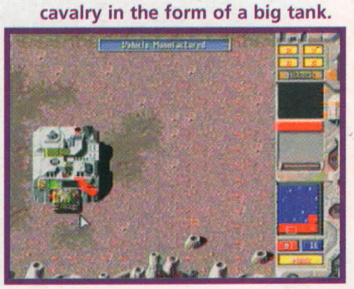
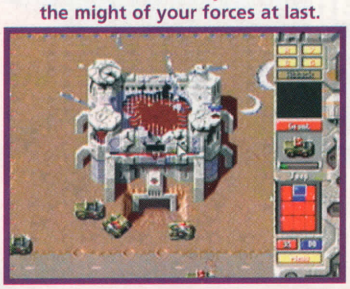

Welcome to your head-quarters. Defending this is paramount.


Good news! Here comes the cavalry in the form of a big tank.


Kaboom! The enemy base falls to the might of your forces at last.

Just producing hundreds of the same unit is the key to success.

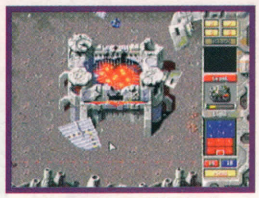
From: Sony
Available: Late January
£34.99

1 Player | Memory Card | Mouse Compatible | Analogue Controller

Words: Will Groves

Z

Here we are on one of the later snow levels.


Oops. Now this isn't what we want to see.

Z was originally coded for the PC by the royalty of '80s programming, the Bitmap Brothers. The Bitmaps were famous for producing great Amiga games (with console and PC conversions), earning them a reputation for playability and quality in a crowded market. Of course, these days they're just forgotten old has-beens, and on the strength of *Z*, they look likely to remain so.

What we have here is a game which to all intents and purposes is *Command and Conquer* – but different. You still get to boss your little blokes about, produce reinforcements and, after completely hammering your opponent on one map, move on to another, trickier one. To make things more interesting (and different to *C&C*) the unit-producing structures have been scattered around the play area with no player actually 'owning' them. Rather than having to harvest minerals to earn cash for building, *Z* allows you to build as many of the units as you require as long as the building is in your possession, the penalty being that the more powerful the unit, the more time it takes to build.

Ah yes. Another element which sets it apart from *C&C* is the way the action now revolves around occupying areas by capturing flags, each marking a particular zone on the map. Capture a flag and all the buildings in its zone are yours. A certain amount of strategic thought needs to go into how you approach your advance. Sometimes the flags which control an area can be set apart from the actual building it controls, meaning that the flag must be closely guarded. You kind of work your way over the map, capturing adjacent zones until they're all yours or alternatively, victory can be secured by the destruction of the enemy's headquarters. However, the reverse is possible too, for by advancing too hastily and foolishly you'll allow the enemy past you to steal your base.

Z adds a humourous element to the genre thanks to its troops, who are lager-swilling moronic robots making war for the hell of it, travelling from planet to planet kicking 'bottom'. The environments are quite varied in their layout (if not in their conception) and the little, futuristic units themselves range from your bog-standard robots to jeeps and various heavier tanky vehicles, plus static gun emplacements.

Your troops also come in various

The faint dotted line you can see is the route your troops are taking.

Nearly all units can plow their way through the rock formations. Voila.

Time Is Of The Essence

Below are some of the units which will be absolutely necessary to your Napoleonic plans.

Grunts-are-us at the start of the game. Basically basic troops.

Jeeps can take out nearly any ground troops but not tanks.

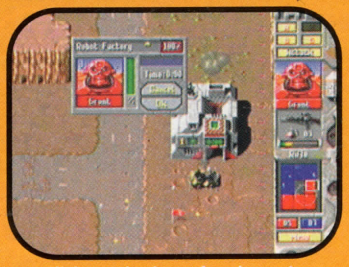
Here is a small tank. Great for all-round killing and maiming.

Better still is the medium tank which trounces most units. Cor.

How To Take A Bunker

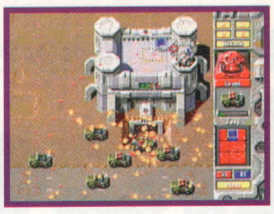
Here for your delight are the instructions to storming a bunker and then successfully producing battle units in three easy steps.

Send in a unit harder than the defenders and take the flag.



Click on the base for the unit menu and choose what to make.

Lo and behold, before too long out pop your brand new units.

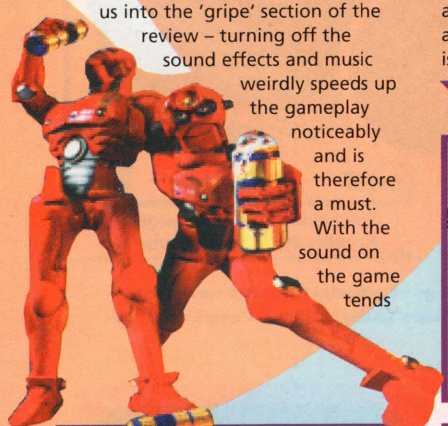


types: Psychos are fast but pretty weak; Grunts are all-round attack troops; Toughs carry meaty rocket launchers but are slow; whereas snipers who have them are accurate at long range, allowing you to pick off the driver of an enemy vehicle, then run one of your chaps in to steal it.

The sound is of a good standard with samples either telling you that you are under attack in some area or commenting on your progress, and the accompanying music is okay. However – and this leads us into the 'gripe' section of the review – turning off the sound effects and music weirdly speeds up the gameplay noticeably and is therefore a must. With the sound on the game tends to play like it's swimming through syrup with slow, jerky scrolling and dodgy animation. Odd.

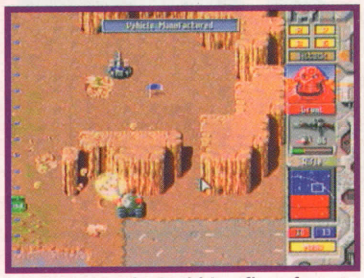
"With the sound on the game tends to play like it's swimming through syrup with slow, jerky scrolling and some dodgy animation"

All in all, *Z* falls short of the engaging gameplay seen in *C&C: Red Alert* (the master of the genre) due to a few factors like the one above. For one the difficulty level can be exceptionally difficult on some levels. There is a real knack to completing some of them and you could well lose interest before you discover the elusive combination of troop movements and attacks – unlike *C&C* where there were a million ways to win. A sideline to this is the fact that the game can become repetitive as you try different strategies – and lose. Add to that the horrendous loading times and you'll wonder why you're bothering to play. Even playing with a mouse (which, as per *C&C*, peps things up enormously, making the game easier to play) can't save *Z*. Fact is you might as well stick to *C&C: Red Alert* – easily twice as good.



Doh! Don't fancy our chances much. Blue blokes with guns approaching.

Bad news-a-saurus! Here come the bad guys to take your base.



Faster, tank! Grabbing flags faster than the enemy means prizes.

Score

Gameplay

- Playability
- Originality
- Lastability

Graphics

- Animation
- Effects
- Presentation

Sound

- Music
- Effects
- Atmosphere

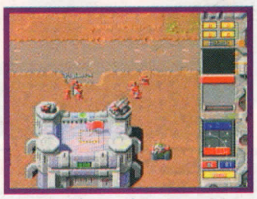
This combination of production management, strategy and humour should have been a winning formula but even the first *C&C* trounces this mediocre effort for gameplay, action and polish. WILL

Power

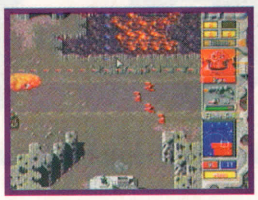
6

Value £ £

Tanks take the longest to build but are great.



Build another turret to defend your HQ better.

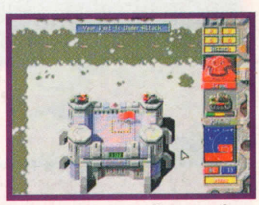


Grunts delay other units but not for long.

The game gets very, very hard, very quickly.

The enemy pound your troops all too easily.

Later more exotic troops can be built.



Messages tell you when your troops are ready.

It's A Grab-'Em-Up

Call it clutching at straws but, if you're looking for positive angles, one worthy aspect of this game is the range of weapons available. Just take a look at the bizarre arsenal you have at your disposal.

A straightforward missile. You have an infinite number of these.

A guided missile. A camera follows it as you steer it.

The Piranha weapon. A load of explosive fish essentially.

A homing missile. Let it go and it, yes, homes in on the enemy.

From: GT Interactive
Available: Late February
£39.99
1-2 Player
Memory Card
Words: Sean Atkins

Critical Depth

The French team has a yellow sub with two arms. It's crap though.

This shot looks quite nice. But in truth, the game looks ropey.

Where did this come from? It's usually nice to have some background on a game before you play it. The features, any unique touches, information on actually playing the game. With *Critical Depth*, we started the reviewing process blind, and in this instance, it was probably an advantage because we were able to gradually pick up on the game's many flaws without any awareness of the game's pedigree to cloud our judgement. Perhaps the under-promotion of the game is due to its quality. Perhaps.

The first thing we noticed was the graphical style, or lack of it. The 3D engine is basic to say the least. While pop-up isn't overridingly apparent, break up of the polygons certainly is. At times you can see the inside of objects right up until you get near them and the game decides to draw in the walls. You can occasionally find yourself trapped between a wall and an undersea plant, unable to pull out for no good reason and subjected to polygonal object break up all around you, leaving you totally disorientated. Despite all this though, there is something familiar about the visuals. Something gritty that reminds you of something good, even though what's in front of your eyes clearly isn't.

Then there's the game structure. The plot involves the discovery of several so-called Threshold Gateways under the sea. It is suspected that these gates are portals to another planet – one which is inhabited by a race called the Reticulans – and have been placed there in preparation for an invasion of Earth. However, this is not certain because the government have been covertly dealing with the Reticulans since their first appearance during the famous Roswell incident. The upshot is that as one of twelve characters (CIA agent, French agent and Soviet operatives among them) you need to play Fox Mulder and discover the secret behind these occurrences.

All this suggests that you'll be involved in some highly tactical, mission-based shenanigans, not dissimilar to *Nuclear Strike* or, more accurately, *Tiger Shark*, but this turns out not to be the case. Yes, you get briefings, but the missions themselves simply involve hareing around the play

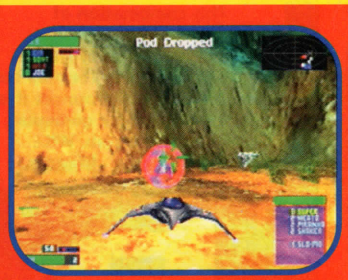
The arenas are quite varied. This part takes place in a glass dome.

You have a locked-on target. Let fly with those homing missiles.

I Can Sea You

So, *Critical Depth* is a bit of a turkey. But the competitive gameplay will, at the very least, provide a modicum of satisfaction. It's basically a race (and a battle) to obtain five energy pods. Some you'll find just lying around, others will have already been collected by an opponent. In this instance you have to blast your opponent so that they drop the pod. Here's how it works.

Collect any pods that are just lying around on the sea bed.



Now get tooled up by scouring the floor for extra weapons.

Shoot your opponents so they drop their pods. Collect them.

Once you have all five pods, find the now-active portal and exit.

A shaker. It's a missile really, but wobbles around a bit. Odd.

The Slow-mo. A large, slow object, but highly explosive.

Each craft has its own special weapon. This one has a grapple.

Whereas this one has a very powerful laser weapon.

area trying to pick up five energy pods which will activate the 'Threshold' so you can escape the level. What's more, you have to do this while a number of the other characters do the same. The result is a mad melee of submarine warfare, utilising some varied pick-uppable weaponry.

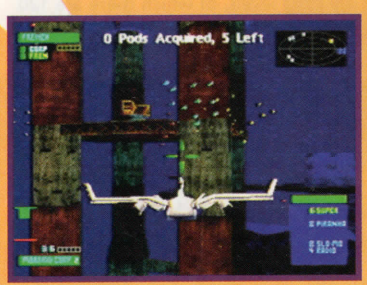
It's not deep by any means – this is a 3D shoot-'em-up where the underwater aspect of the game might as well be deep space or some other sluggish medium – and once again you're left feeling that it's a pale reflection of something you've played before...

... AND IT IS! You see, this game has been developed by the geezers who created *Twisted Metal*. Once you discover this fact, you suddenly realise that this game *is Twisted Metal*, only it's underwater and as a result, not nearly as good. *Twisted Metal* wasn't much of a looker even when it first came out (glitching polygons, poor frame rate) and the visuals in *Critical Depth* are no better which is shocking considering how far 3D PlayStation games have come in recent months. Worse still is the fact that when placed in water, *Twisted Metal*'s high speed, highly explosive action becomes somehow slower, more nebulous and an altogether more sodden affair.

"The result is a mad melee of submarine warfare, utilising some varied pick-uppable weaponry. It's not deep by any means..."

The saving grace is the design of the battle arenas themselves. There are 11 in all and to be fair to an otherwise highly disappointing game, these arenas are very smartly designed. For example, having secured a couple of energy pods (thus preventing the enemies from collecting them and finishing the level at your expense) you can then pootle off and discover the secrets of the level. In one, for example, there's a small underwater temple. Enter it and you discover a whole network of tunnels filled with power-ups. Quite often the enemies will also end up down there and combat takes on a whole new aspect as you try to pick each other off in the claustrophobic confines of the corridors. Fair cop.

Did we enjoy the *Critical Depth* experience? Yes, after a while. And the 'must have another crack' factor was certainly there to a degree. But would we pay good money for it? No, we wouldn't. The game is, quite simply, shoddy. It looks bad, and while it plays okay, the truth is that it's been done before and done better. P



One of the many secret tunnels in the game. Search around to find hidden areas that will give you a rest from the action.

Score

Gameplay

Playability	
Originality	
Lastability	

Graphics

Animation	
Effects	
Presentation	

Sound

Music	
Effects	
Atmosphere	

Twisted Metal under the sea... but not nearly as good. A graphical disaster that gains a little from its moderately enjoyable gameplay, but actually manages to be worse than its land-based ancestor. SEAN

PlayStation Power

5

Value £ £

A wrecked submarine. It doesn't do anything.

The exit. But it isn't active. Get more orbs.

Grab the Piranha icon for more firepower.

This is the CIA's craft. Fast, but a bit weedy.

If you were that chopper pilot, you'd be flying in the opposite direction too, wouldn't you?

Mass destruction should be a right laugh. But oddly, this game makes it dull in the extreme.

Punch downwards and you can take out that airliner. Not very nice, but somehow pleasing.

From: GT Interactive
Available: Late February
£44.99
1-2 Players
Memory Card

Words: Daniel Griffiths

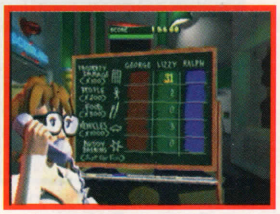
Rampage World Tour

I remember the original *Rampage* coin-op from when I was a young 'un. I thought it was bloody ridiculous game even then so the emergence of a PlayStation update didn't fill me with excitement. I hoped that the new version had been overhauled completely and made into an amusingly different gaming experience. No such luck. PlayStation *Rampage* is a turkey, and like everyone else round about now, we've had about as much turkey as we can take, thank you very much.

The damning factor is the game's complete and utter pointlessness. There's a healthy measure of originality – sure it's an update of an old game but the 2D building-smashing 'monster on the rampage' premise is still very different from anything else you'll find on the PlayStation – but no matter how much you play it and no matter how hard you dig for what entertainment lurks within, you always come away thinking "I've just wasted several hours of my life".

You play the part of one of three B-movie monsters. Whether it be Lizzie the Godzilla-style dinosaur, George the giant gorilla or Ralph the giant wolf you'll soon discover that the results are the same. Apart from their appearance, each character's ability, moves and their effect on the game are identical. Had they been different, had Lizzie destroyed buildings from a distance with fiery breath while George punches them to destruction close-up then you would have had a reason to play the game through three times over. As it stands, what's the point? It's good for us because we get some more varied screenshots (ooh, let's have *Ralph* kicking the skyscraper this time), but for the player it's total sodding nonsense. But worse than this and what buggers the game completely is that the levels, of which there are 120, are about as varied as, well, 120 white china plates. "Wow, look! This one has

It's all got a bit messy for poor old Ralph.



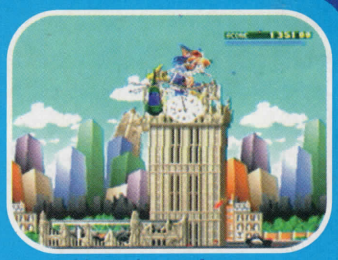
All Around The World

Reveal a flag inside a building. Next punch the flag and it spins around. When it stops you'll notice that it has changed into a different flag. When you get to the next level you'll find you are in the country whose flag you revealed. Brilliant! Everything's much the same though.

Smash the buildings to reveal a flag. In this case, it's an American stars and stripes.

Leave the flag alone and you'll carry on destroying American cities like this one.

We've now punched the flag and turned it into a Union Jack. This is Edinburgh castle.



And how do you fancy punching Big Ben and messing up the Houses of Parliament?

It Makes Me Puke

The beasties in this game really have quite a hard time of it when all's said and done. Eat the wrong things or put a foot wrong and all sorts of things can happen to you. Here are just four of the many ways in which your monstrous character can be harmed.

There's Lizzie getting her toes burned. Nasty business.

Ralph is about to get the old carpet bombing treatment.

Be careful around those neon signs. You'll get a nasty shock.

Don't eat things that aren't food. Or you'll vomit, horribly.

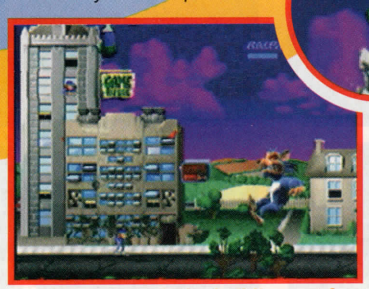
a small chip on its edge. Gosh, and this one here has a sort of matt glaze while the others have a gloss finish. And would you believe it, I've found one with a potter's date stamp that's slightly off centre." Are we labouring the point? Oh no, we are not. This is possibly – and most probably – the most repetitive game in the known universe.

There are elements of the gameplay that, presumably, are supposed to make the game worth going back to time after time. For example, at the end of each level you get a rundown of your performance. There are categories for property damage, people, food, vehicles and buddy bashing, and if you perform well in any of these areas you get a special points bonus. But because you play through the levels sequentially, there's no opportunity to select any single level and try to better your previous performance. A time limit for each level would have helped too, but this is conspicuous by its absence. The only area in which there's some semblance of competition is in the simultaneous two-player mode when each of you try to destroy the most buildings, but again there are no real bouts to speak of, you just both plough through the 120 levels together.

There's plenty going on in the levels, but once again, even this aspect is badly done. As you attempt to destroy the city all sorts of other hazards face you. There are choppers, planes, spaceships, tanks, flamethrower-wielding jetpackers and much more all attacking you as you try to do your job. But rather than these posing a strategic problem, they're all just a hindrance – like a swarm of flies buzzing around your head. The easiest way to tackle these assailants is not to tackle them at all but ignore them completely, destroy the city as quickly as possible and get onto the next level. It's stupid because you have infinite continues thus rendering the enemies pointless. These infinite continues also make the handful of power-ups in the game pointless too. Why waste time trying to hunt down a More Power icon when your standard attacks will get you through the game with ease.

> **Choppers, planes, spaceships, flamethrower-wielding jetpackers, tanks and much more attack you as you try to do your job**

Rampage is a ridiculous game, plain and simple. It could have been so much better. Had its quaint classic looks and interesting premise been bolstered by some well thought out, competitive gameplay, it could have been one of those quirky, yet surprisingly pleasurable games. As it stands, unfortunately, it's a farce.



You can punch the building out for bonuses and extra points. Or...

... bounce the buildings to destroy them quickly. It's the easiest option.

Score

Gameplay

- Playability
- Originality
- Lastability

Graphics

- Animation
- Effects
- Presentation

Sound

- Music
- Effects
- Atmosphere

Completely pointless. After only 20 of the 120 very similar and boring levels you'll be rendered zombiè-like by the crushing repetition of it all. Not worth bothering with in the slightest. DANIEL

PlayStation Power

2

Value £

Ooh, it's like King Kong all over again. How sad.

Eat the pedestrians for a very minor laugh.

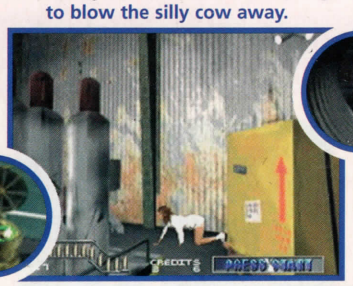
You can grab the tanks, but it's risky. Avoid 'em.

Don't step on the burning debris.

Two handy hints. DESTROY! EAT! Simple.

Not cans of pop but deadly depth charges. Destroy them.

A lady on all fours. It's tempting to blow the silly cow away.



This is the quad bike section. You don't control it, though.

A innocent nerdy beachcomber. Again, shoot him for added fun.

From: GT Interactive
Available: Now
£39.99

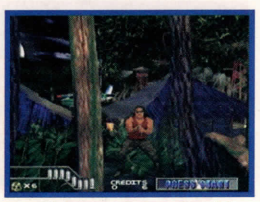
1-2 Players
Memory Card
G-Con 45 Controller

Words: Will Groves

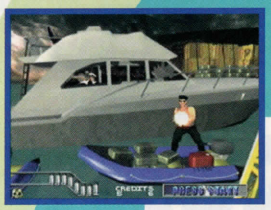
Maximum Force

Shark Shooter

As soon as you begin the underwater section of the first mission, shoot the tethered mines in a certain order and you'll access this stunning sub-game. Basically, you have to shoot as many sharks as you can within the time limit, while also trying to avoid shooting the bikini-clad young ladies of loveliness. The reward for success is, um, a little window that tells you how many sharks you got. The penalty for failure is, well, there isn't one. We're not really sure why this bit of the game is here. Ah, but the stunning visuals of this section make up for its pointlessness, yes? No. For some reason, unlike the rest of the pre-rendered stuff this is a two-dimensional single screen affair... a sort of dated flat duck shoot. Fun? Yes, once. But it doesn't really represent extra value, does it?



This man is involved in drugs. So kill him.



Slap the coin in the slot, spend a few minutes posturing in front of a massive coin-op cabinet, pretending to be the finest shot in the universe, then walk away, your bloodlust satisfied. That's the deal. That's the contract. That's why arcade lightgun games are a laugh. It's also why home versions aren't quite as good. Without exception they are too short and until a new type of controller is created they are all doomed to be fundamentally the same. So those of you with only a passing interest can now saunter off leaving us who bought the lightguns (and are constantly gagging for new compatible games to come out for it) to see how this particular lightgun game squares up to the others.

Structurally, it's pretty standard. In the absence of any firm plot details, you play the part of some sort of government operative, who is sent on three dangerous missions, two of which are available from the start and, when completed, you get to try out the third, secret mission. Mission one sees you trailing some stolen nuclear warheads. There's a scene on a boat, an underwater trip through a minefield and ultimately a showdown in a huge hangar where the warheads are stored. Mission two involves bank robberies and terrorists. This time there's lots of dodging behind cash desks, opening lift doors and a final showdown on the roof of the building. The third and final mission is – ah yes, old faithful – a trip through the jungle as you try to eliminate a South American drugs cartel. As you might expect, each mission lasts little more than five minutes. However, as you'll also know if you like these games, the inclusion of accuracy figures, shots used, time elapsed, damage and Streak (how many consecutive hits you make) mean that you can play the game over and over again, upping those high scores.

> **Missions involve stolen nuclear warheads, bank robberies, terrorists and the old faithful South American drugs cartel...**

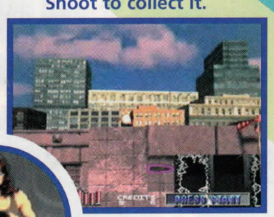
Maximum Force also has a few little secrets... well, when we say a few, only one has been discovered at this stage but we assume there will be more. On the second mission, after shooting certain mines in a certain order, a mini game is accessed where you shoot as many sharks as you can within a time limit.

Crap, but mildly amusing nonetheless.

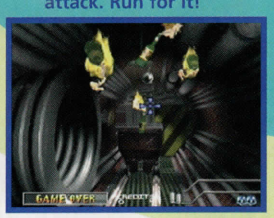
So that's all sounding pretty standard but at the same time fairly jolly. The big disappointment though is to your eyes. Many of you won't be familiar with the Mega CD, Sega's CD ROM add-on to

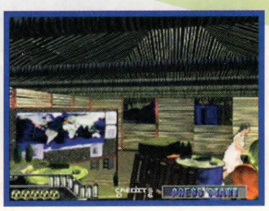
Shoot the little jetskiers as they innocently enjoy pleasant watersports on a sunny Sunday afternoon.

That's a bonus weapon. Shoot to collect it.



Frenzied petrol bomb attack. Run for it!

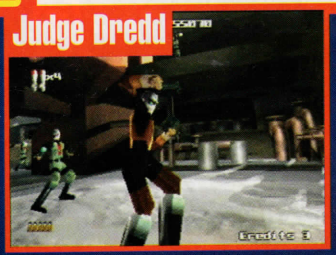




Gun Club

Let's not pretend the International Club For Lightgun Games is over-subscribed. You could probably fit the entire membership in a shoebox and still have room for a pair of flip-flops. But their numbers are growing and the PlayStation plays host to more lightgun games than any previous console. For once, it seems, it's actually worth splashing out the cash on one of these harmless firearms. Below are four recent entries into the arena. If you're into gun games, all are worth a look, but even this tiny handful vary wildly in quality.

Judge Dredd



Reviewed in issue 21 and rated a seemingly paltry 6/10, *Judge Dredd* is nevertheless a worthy addition to the shetland pony-sized stable of lightgun games. Visually, you're in for a disappointment. Its pre-rendered visuals are not, as the saying goes, anything to pen any correspondence to your folks about but the action is, if not relentless, then pretty frantic and of course there's always the tenuous thrill of being involved in any true Brit's favourite comic to make it worth at least a second glance (though a third is probably pushing it). Plus of course it's compatible with the brilliant G-Con 45 which alone makes it worth a go. Well, maybe not, but check it out.

Crypt Killer

Again we must stress the point. Lightgun games are always, at their most basic level, simply fairground shooting galleries dressed as proper videogames. So with this in mind, even *Crypt Killer* will provide a solid foundation of blam-blam-blam-yesss-I-got-more-than-last-time entertainment. But beyond that, this is a shambolic attempt by anyone's standards. The pacing of the game is poor – which is unforgivable when you consider the rudimentary nature of the lightgun genre – but worse, the visuals are shockingly turdy. Dreadful 3D which breaks up all over the gaff, jerks around like a cheap video recorder on frame skip and, and, oh look, it's vile.

Die Hard Trilogy

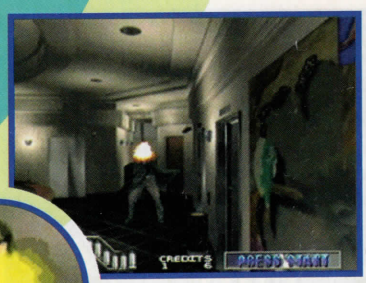
A fantastic game that many described as three full games in one. And why did they describe it thus? Because that's exactly what it is. It was reviewed back in issue four and was rated a whopping 9/10 and it's still top fun. The Die Harder section which takes place in an airport is the lightgun section and while you can't use the stunning new G-Con 45 with it (it's a bit long in the tooth now, you understand) it's still a cracking good example of 3D lightgunnery. Worth buying for the lightgun-compatible section alone... and the *Die Hard* section alone... and the *Die Hard With A Vengeance* section alone for that matter. A classic PlayStation title.

Time Crisis

This is the sole reason anyone is talking about lightgun games. It prompted Namco to create the G-Con 45 and indicates that the genre could be a staple part of the videogame diet in years to come. The appeal lies in beautifully paced action and 3D graphics which capture the quality and atmosphere of the original. Then there's the duck button. Press the on-gun button and you'll duck out of the action, avoiding a pasting and reloading in the process. Release it and you're back into the thick of it. This provides interaction that transforms the game from a shooting gallery into a full-on, immersive, thrilling, "I'll take the lorra yuz on" experience. Nice.

the Mega Drive. Those of you who are will look at the screen grabs here and know exactly what we mean. The Mega Drive couldn't do 3D very well, so the Mega CD cheated and pulled fancy graphics off a CD instead. In a similar way, rather than use the PlayStation's extensive range of 3D capabilities to create a flashy polygonal world (in the way that the mighty *Time Crisis* and Sega's admittedly smart *Virtua Cop* does) *Maximum Force* opts instead to use pre-rendered sequences. These are extremely posh visuals, created on an expensive computer graphics workstation, then played like a video through the PlayStation. The result is grainy and a bit poo (not a technical term but most appropriate). Over the top of this 'movie' are slapped digitised people who creep out from behind crates or appear suddenly in the foreground, never quite looking like they belong in the FMV movie going on in the background. The paradox is that although the original rendered images are incredibly realistic, when replayed through a PlayStation they just look cheesy compared to the relatively unrealistic polygon worlds that are now commonplace and lend themselves much more readily to the player's suspension of disbelief.

All of this technical bollards leads us to the conclusion that *Maximum Force* is, in its limited way, quite a laugh, but nowhere near as good as *Time Crisis*. You've got the gun, there's nothing else to buy, so give *Max' Force* a try. But if you're not a constantly frustrated light gun devotee, and not yet convinced about these games, then this is going to do nothing to entice you to join the fray.



Most of the women in the game are bloody useless. Bring back Lara.

Sneaky little blighter. Be wary of distant assailants like this one.

Score

Gameplay

- Playability
- Originality
- Lastability

Graphics

- Animation
- Effects
- Presentation

Sound

- Music
- Effects
- Atmosphere

Playable and solid enough lightgun fare. But quite simply not in the same league as *Time Crisis*. By all means buy *Maximum Force* to justify the purchase of your gun, but don't expect too many fireworks. WILL

PlayStation Power

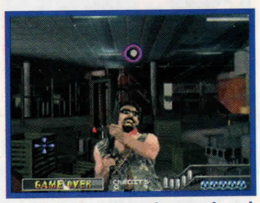
6

Value £

Shoot the chopper. Watch out for rockets.

There's quite a lot of explosive action.

These girls are nasty. Blow their heads off.



It's the drug baron level again. Did you guess?

Hill is a slap-head, and what an hilariously massive, slappy head it is too. How we laughed.

There's that Ker-azee guy Dennis Rodman with his zany crop of bright green hair. Ha, haaa...

Whose Tufty? And why does he look like that? Check out the "I've Created A Monster" box.

From: GT Interactive
Available: Now
£39.99
1 Player
Memory Card
Words: Sean Atkins

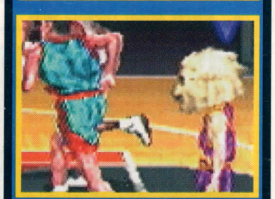
NBA Hangtime

I Have Created A Monster

Find NBA players a bit dull? Then what you need is the Amazing Build-o-Matic™ Create A Player option. You can create a bizarre player of your own, give him whatever outfit you want, change his stats then save him out to memory card to use in proper matches.

I shall create Tufty, the ultimate player.

He shall play for the Chicago Bulls.

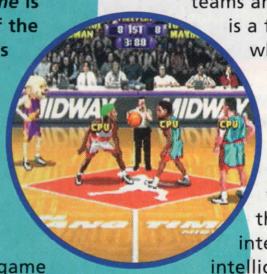


And he shall look a complete nob end.

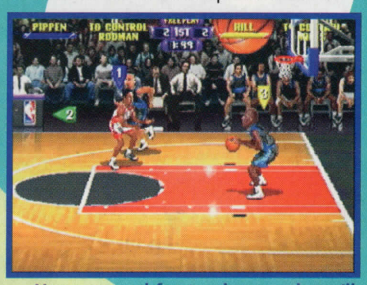
When *NBA Jam* from Acclaim first came out, it was a revelation. No effort was made to make the game realistic. The point of it was sheer fun. The speed, the pared-down two-on-two action, the ridiculously high slam-dunks, the fiery balls, the sample cries of "He's on fire". It all added up to a heap of fun. The good news is that *NBA Hangtime* is actually a continuation of the *Jam* series and so contains all of these desirable qualities. The sad part is that we've seen it all before and apart from the visuals, the older games were better.

Tufty scores a stunning basket with a furry-faced slam-dunk. Brillo!

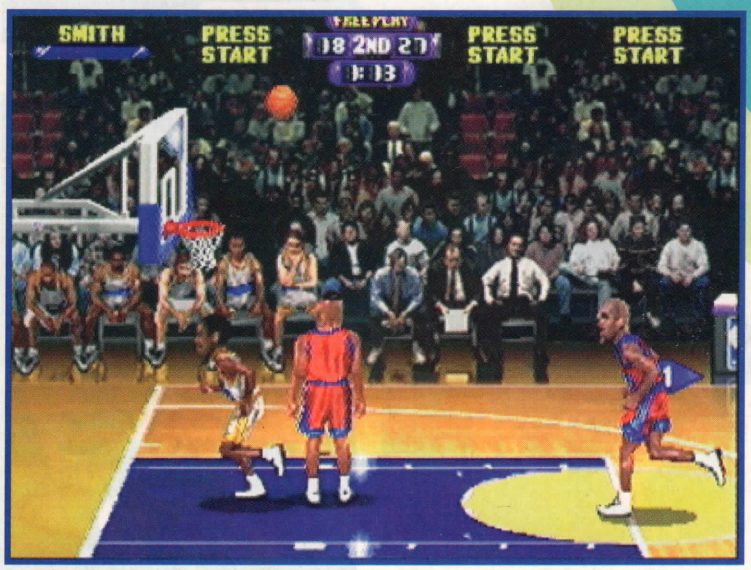
First up, the tedious part. *NBA Hangtime* is a relatively comprehensive game featuring all 29 NBA teams, each with six real selectable players used in teams of two. There are almost 150 individual players each with their own characteristics. There's also a tournament mode and many other switchable options but, and here's the first major criticism, the front end of the game is a bloody minefield and getting used to choosing players, teams and setting up your game is a fiddlesome nightmare which is very off-putting.



Once you've selected your team, it's time to start playing. No real problems here – the players are responsive, the moves are smart, and the opposition is highly intelligent, almost too intelligent. The trouble is, the game appears to compensate for poor play (a bit like the catch-up systems used in racing games to keep the cars in a tight pack). This is fine for the novice player, the games are always close, but it all gets a bit tiresome after a while. It ends up more like a



Hang around for too long and you'll be penalised (sounds painful).



Their heads do look big don't they. But that's just the standard size. They get even bigger and you can read all about that elsewhere in this review.

Actually being penalised sounds downright illegal if you ask us.

GRAN TURISMO

Will Sony's high-octane racer set new standards for PlayStation racing games? Edge roadtests the Japanese version in issue 55.

EDGE®
issue 55 on sale Jan 27

BACK ISSUES

We're now totally out of issues one to 15! Collector's items one and all. Best be quick with issues 16, 18, 20 and 21 too! If you're missing any of the issues below you'd best fill in the form at the bottom of the page or phone the hotline and make sure you don't miss out this time. Be quick!

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SOLD OUT

With massive guides for:
Soul Blade
Tenka
Exhumed (part 2)

Plus small cheats for:
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Rage Racer
NHL '97
Porsche Challenge
Need for Speed 2
MMV3
NBA Jam Extreme
Excalibur 2555AD

A huge *Tomb Raider 2* exclusive preview, the definitive *Rage Racer* and *V-Rally* reviews plus Psygnosis' winter '97 line-up EXPOSED! All in all – stoating.

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More MMV3
Total NBA '97
Spider
Nanotek Warrior

Crash Bandicoot 2 revealed! Plus we tell you precisely how to land a job playing PlayStation games all day and we test Sony's new analogue pad and play *Time Crisis*!

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With massive guides for:
Syndicate Wars (part 1)
OverBlood
Sulkoden (part 2)

Plus small cheats for:
Independence Day
The Crow
NHL Face-Off
Soviet Strike
Area 51
Space Jam
NBA Jam Extreme

Find out all the games you'll be playing for the next year in our 18-page E3 feature! Plus *WarCraft 2, War Gods, Ray Tracer, Tiger Shark* and *Test Drive* reviewed.

17

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Vandal Hearts (part 1)
Syndicate Wars (part 2)
Sulkoden (part 3)
The City of Lost Children

Plus small cheats for:
C&C
War Gods
Monster Trucks
Rage Racer

Street Fighter EX Plus Alpha taken apart in our exclusive feature! PLUS we try out the new flock of 3D platformers and review *The Lost World* and *PaRappa*!

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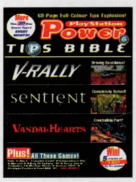

With massive guides for:
V-Rally
Sentient (complete it!)
Vandal Hearts (final part)

Plus small cheats for:
Warcraft 2
Toshinden 3
Xevious 3D/G
Machine Hunter
Total NBA '97
Independence Day

Review madness! Vast reviews of *G-Police, Total Drivin', Oddworld: Abe's Oddysee*, and *Formula 1 '97*! PLUS we play the English language version of *Final Fantasy VII* at last!

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SOLD OUT

With massive guides for:
The Lost World (part 1)
G-Police (part 1)
Battle Arena Toshinden 3
Warcraft 2

Plus small cheats for:
The Lost World
Speedster
V-Rally
Bubsy 3D
Tiger Shark

Colony Wars world's FIRST review. PLUS *Street Fighter EX Plus Alpha, Rapid Racer, Overboard, Castlevania, Nightmare Creatures* reviewed!

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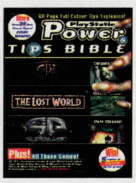

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Speedster
V-Rally
Bubsy 3D
Tiger Shark

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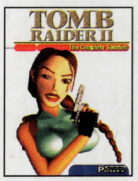

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UNDER CONSTRUCTION

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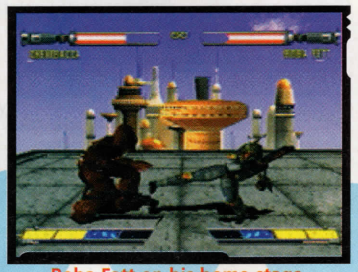
Time to gaze into the crystal ball again. Cross our palms with silver and sit back as we take you on an in-depth tour of the near future...

Luke's Flying Cutting Sabre takes two or more gold power bars.


Boba Fett on his home stage, Cloud City. Very nice it is too.

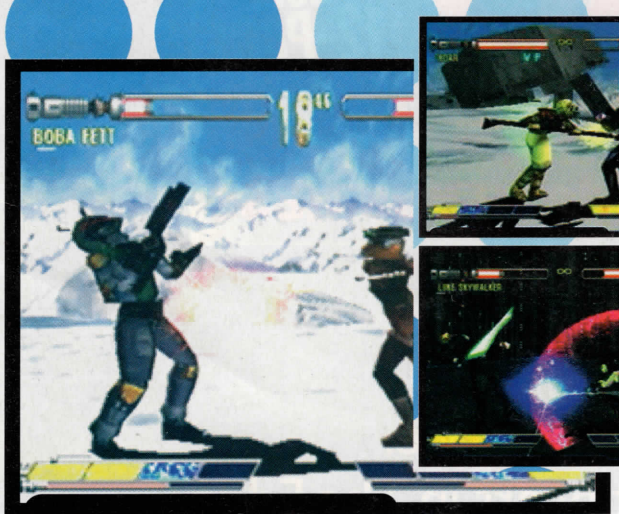
This is the chamber where Han Solo gets frozen in Empire.

Yes, it's Darth. Beat him with Luke and he becomes playable.

A long time ago, in a galaxy far far away... someone decided to do a Star Wars beat-'em-up. Finally, it's arrived in the *PlayStation Power* office.

Words: Will Groves

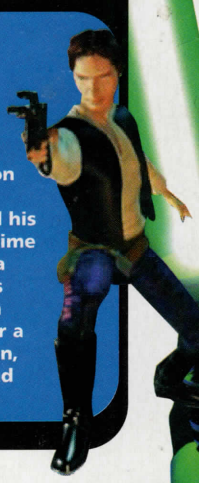
Star Wars
Masters of Teräs Käsi



It's an idea so good, so bloody obvious, that it simply had to happen. It's to LucasArts' credit then that *Star Wars: Masters of Teräs Käsi* is no cynical cash-in. From the very first bout, it's clear that this is in fact a lovingly crafted addition to the meticulously cross-referenced Star Wars universe. And don't forget, this most powerful of franchises has been let down before, by the slick but pump likes of *Rebel Assault 2*.

For a start there's *that* music, constantly booming away in the background, stamping home the license's authority. All the effects are skin tinglingly authentic, too.

Star Warriors



HAN SOLO (Pilot and Smuggler)
Weapon: Blaster
The Alliance took Han from a smuggler's existence into a head-on collision with the Empire. His early struggles forged his fighting skills, while time in cantinas gave him a glimpse of teräs käsi's fighting styles. With a price on his head after a botched smuggling run, Han is a dangerous and

Leia's change of strip is her bounty hunter disguise from Return of the Jedi.

There are plenty of attractive spot lighting effects like this.

When one of Chewie's fierce combos connect you'll know all about it.

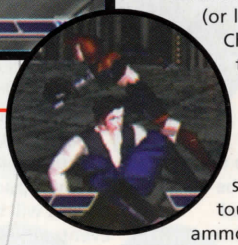
Star Warriors

BOBA FETT (Bounty Hunter)
Weapon: Blaster Rifle
Armed with his Mandalore battle armour and a vast array of deadly weapons, Boba Fett deserves his reputation as the most feared bounty hunter in the galaxy. His ruthless nature combined with his favourite blaster rifle leave his opponents with little hope of escape.

Han swears by his blaster, but a side-step dodges any shots.

When you get your weapon out, your normal attacks can become clumsy. Here Han's use of the blaster reduces his kick to this clunky goose-step.

Boba Fett turns tail, as well he might in the face of Arden Lyn's frightening onslaught.



From the character's in-game grunts and squeals to the humming and crackling lightsabres favoured by Luke Skywalker and Darth Vader, it all sounds exactly as it should, cranking up the game's atmosphere still further.

Each character's post fight victory pay-off line also rings true. Now, we're not sure whether these are cleverly sampled and rejiggled phrases from the films themselves, but they might as well be, such is their authenticity. Han Solo waxes lyrical about his blaster, Luke's just ever so slightly slightly too cocky, Boba Fett growls 'I'd better be getting paid for this' and Darth dismisses vanquished enemies with a distinctively bunged up 'The Force is not strong in this one.' Very nice, and absolutely essential to satisfy what must be the most frighteningly anal, spotterish fan base there is, apart from Star Trek fans that is, obviously.

So it sounds authentic then, but it also looks the part. The fighters might not be *quite* as slick as *Tekken 2*'s but they're not far off and, more importantly, they're instantly recognisable. Okay, it's not difficult to make a recognisable Star Wars character, given their outfits (or lack of one, in Chewie's case), but the amount of detail on the polygonal figures is impressive. Just check out these shots to see such touches as Chewie's ammo belt, and Boba Fett's scarred helmet and prickly backpack.

The backdrops are also taken from the films. Darth Vader fights in the chamber where he confronts Luke at the end of The Empire Strikes Back, while Boba Fett has Cloud City. There's also a Tatooine stage, one based in the swamps where Yoda lived, another in the snowy battlefield, complete with skimming snow speeders in the background, and one in the forests of the Ewok's home planet, Endor, which boasts a rather impressively animated Empire walker sauntering about. Again, very nice and the least any self-respecting

Star Warriors

LUKE SKYWALKER
(Young Jedi)
Weapon: Lightsaber
Strong in the Force as his father was before him, young Luke Skywalker still has much to learn about embracing the ways of the Jedi and avoiding the temptation of the dark side of the Force. Luke is determined to continue the Jedi Knights' teachings.

Star Warriors

ARDEN LYN (Teräs Käsi Master)
Weapon: Ancient Scary Droid Arm

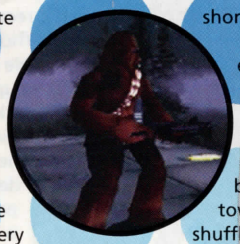
As the order of Jedi resurfaces, so do the teachings of teräs käsi, in the form of Arden Lyn, the master of teräs käsi. A Palawan warrior from the time of Jedi, her youth belies her actual age. Her skills as one of the last teräs käsi masters has attracted the attention of the Emperor and Darth Vader, who have assigned her to track down and take out key Rebel Alliance personnel. Arden, however, has her own agenda... Wooooo!

Luke unloads a big one on Boba. His combos are amongst the easiest to access, and his speed with the lightsabre makes Mr. Skywalker pretty hard.

Boba's flamethrower attack does the business.

Axe wielding maniac Thok goes ballistic.

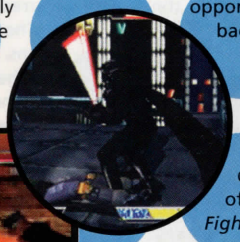
The two most powerful characters slug it out.

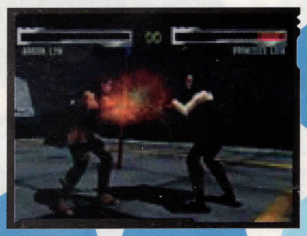


Spod would expect. And despite all this it's still not enough. As classy as it all is, the undeniable attraction of BEING your favourite Star Wars character would soon pale unless this was a decent beat-'em-up. Well, we've been playing the American version and can confidently assure you that unless something goes very badly wrong during the transition to PAL then *Star Wars: Masters of Teräs Käsi* will be able to hold its head high in the crowded and competitive fighting game marketplace. Mind you, unless something goes equally wrong with *Tekken 3*, Namco have nothing to worry about either. Yes, Teräs Käsi will be a very good fighting game but will fall short of ever reaching true greatness.

For starters, it's easily quick enough. The 3D is handled more than adequately, and the figures move with suspiciously motion-capturish fluidity. Via the mystic power of the two left shoulder buttons, the game at least moves towards the full 3D play arena, by shuffling the characters into and out of the screen. Keep shifting sideways and many of your opponent's more basic or projectile attacks will harmlessly fizzle past. You'll also eventually find yourself with the enviable opportunity to literally kick them up the backside, which is nice.

To add more complexity still, the developers have included two fighting modes. Each character has a weapon which they can hoist out at will. While the weapon is out a different range of moves (nearly all of which are either of the *Street Fighter* quarter turn or *Mortal Kombat*



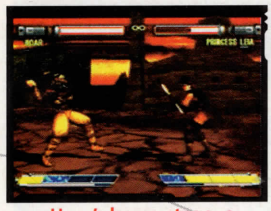


Arden Lyn unleashes her devastating Force Sphere special. She's one of the few characters who has only one fighting mode – her cyborg arm is her weapon.

Star Warriors

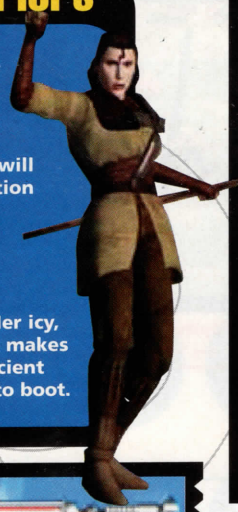
HOAR (Tusken Raider)
Weapon: Gaderffii "Gaffi" Stick

Hoar's people – vicious, nomadic bandits known as the Tusken Raiders – are feared throughout their native Tatooine. Armed with the traditional weapon, the gaffi stick, Hoar travelled off-world to become a student of Arden Lyn. With her guidance, he honed his fighting skills and mastery of teräs käsi. In hand-to-hand combat, Hoar wears the traditional Tusken Raiders' battle mask that includes long, metal pieces protruding from both sides of the jaw. Nasty.



Hoar's home stage, a barren rocky desert.

Star Warriors



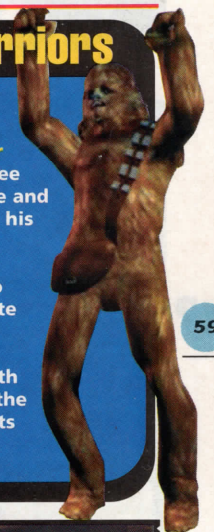
LEIA ORGANA
(Princess)
Weapon: Battle Staff
Princess of the destroyed planet of Alderaan, Leia's iron will and sheer determination help drive the Rebellion's battle against the Empire. Like her brother Skywalker, she too is strong in the Force. Her icy, no-nonsense attitude makes her a deadly and efficient warrior and top bird to boot.

Hoar likes nothing better than to get in close and deliver a stinging uppercut with his deadly piece of pipe. Stand well clear.

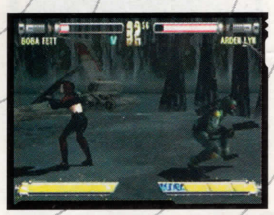
Boba Fett's jetpack allows him to jump higher and further than any of the other characters. It also houses a cluster of heat-seeking missiles.

Han lures Boba in for a sudden roundhouse leg sweep.

Star Warriors



CHEWBACCA
(Wookie)
Weapon: Bowcaster
Chewbacca's foes see his ferocious nature and brute strength, but his allies see his intelligence and loyalty. His bond to Han Solo is complete and unquestioned. Ahh... Chewbacca's tremendous strength and accuracy with the bowcaster are assets in any fight.



double tap variety) is enabled, the usual trade-off being power and range for speed. Han Solo, for instance, can deploy a blaster which can shoot a distant adversary, but his bare handed martial arts style becomes significantly clumsier, blaster in hand.

There's another gameplay wrinkle to found in the combo system. All your combos need to be started with a chain, typically a four action series of kicks and punches, which you can then follow with undisclosed but flexible strings. Very satisfying indeed when successfully executed, believe us.

And there's still more to be mastered, thanks to a charging force bar, which increases whenever you connect with an opponent, or take a hit. Certain special attacks, you see, take energy from this bar and can only be accessed when it's sufficiently full. Obviously, the more 'energy' that's required, the more powerful the attack. A full bar's worth, as you'd expect, unleashes the game's most spectacular and effective special, like Luke's flying lightsabre, Boba Fett's guided missile attack and new character Arden Lynn's devastating force sphere.

The one fly in the ointment could be a lack of moves. At present, it seems that each character has about eight. Maybe we've just not found the rest yet, but we doubt it. Expect the definitive review next issue.

Unload a blaster shot to put Hoar off.

Information	
From:	Virgin/LucasArts
Available:	March

Chewbacca goes all coy as Boba shows his rump.

Star Warriors

THOK
(Gamorrean Warrior)
Weapon: Axe
His size alone makes him a formidable opponent in hand-to-hand combat. Thok's fighting abilities inspire terror in his opponents with his seemingly random fury. By the time his opponents realise that the chaotic frenzy is actually a precisely timed and executed combination, it is too late. The bugger.

The practice mode in full effect. Very handy.

Luke in his alternate costume, which pretty much amounts to a green lightsabre.

There's obviously an uppercut on the way.

It's looking good, but sometimes the camera angles lose the players in the distance.

Your player's shadow displays arrows indicating where your teammates are for passing purposes.

The isometric view is interesting, but not nearly as useful as the lower camera angles.

There's no shortage of hockey games around, but Gremlin's timely official Olympic Ice Hockey title might just slide straight into the top slot...

Words: Sean Atkins

Actua Ice Hockey

The reflective effects on the ice are smart.

A question for you. Why is Ice Hockey popular? Why are there so many PlayStation *NHL* this, that and the bleedin' other games? And why do developers dress it up with all the pizazz of the World Cup final when nobody really gives a monkey's? I mean, when was the last time you went to an Ice Hockey match?

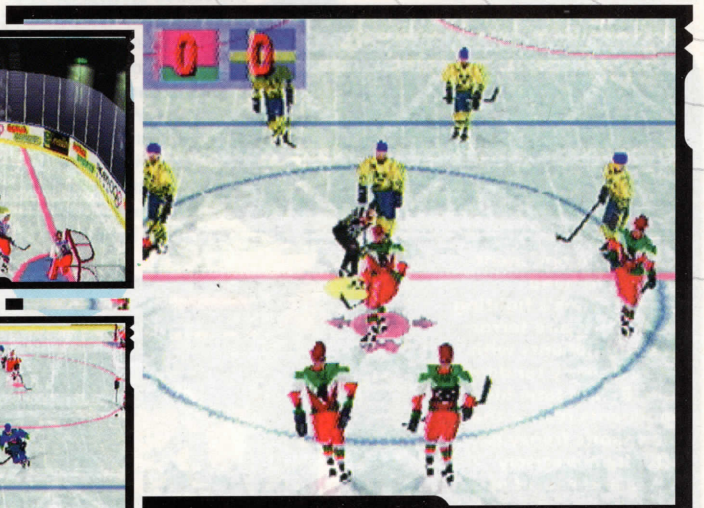
In *Actua Ice Hockey*, whenever a goal is scored, the player is treated to a fantastical light show and musical celebration that goes on for some time. It's all right the first few times, but it quickly becomes tedious. Do you like this unnecessary level of realism? Do the developers include all this eye-candy because the punters demand it? Or because no-one has ever said "cut it out"? We were wondering, that's all.

Aside from the TV-style cosmetic touches, *Actua Ice Hockey* is shaping up to be one of the front-runners in the curiously crowded Ice Hockey videogame arena. For a start you can put aside any "Do we really need yet another hockey game?" questions because *Actua* is based not on the NHL – the sole reason for all other ice hockey games' existence – but on next year's Nagano Winter Olympics. This means that rather than playing as the Seattle Muffins versus the Detroit Casseroles (or some other teams you've never heard of) you get your hands on the world's best international teams, a complete Olympic Tournament, a custom tournament option and the option to play by either international rules (as in the

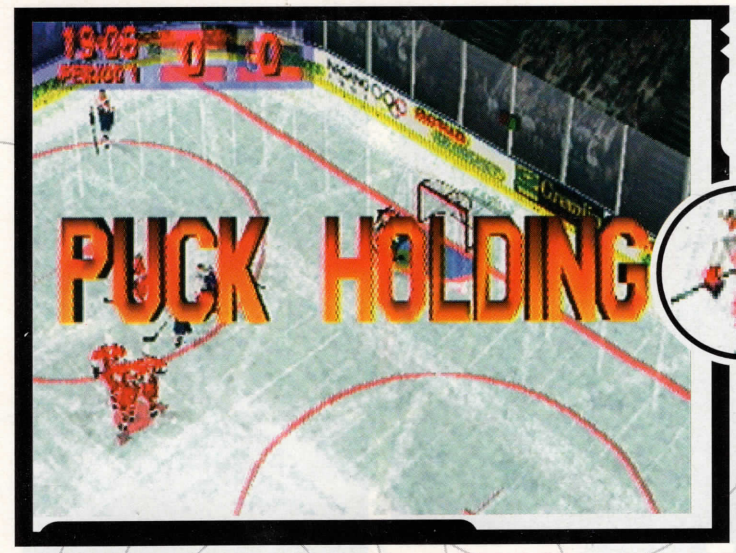
Swot up on the team stats. Belorussia it is.

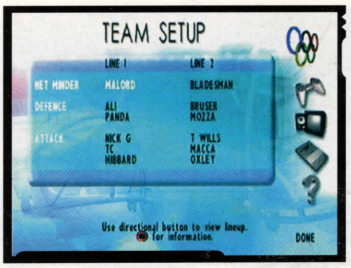
You can customise your own tournament.

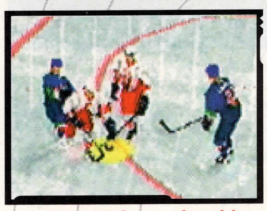
The action is frantic at times. No doubt it will all end in a big fight and several pints of spilled blood.



Prepare for the face off. Unfortunately, at the moment it takes ages for the players to take their places.







You might not be able to tell from these screenshots, but the players are extremely well detailed.

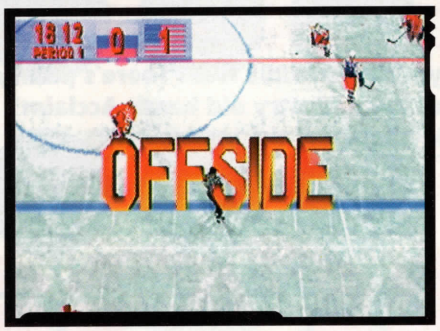
They're also extremely well animated.

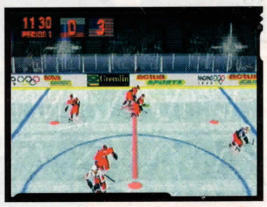
Olympics) or by the more familiar NHL rules.

The game's major selling point is its realism. First off, the visuals are mightily impressive. The players are beautifully realised, the rink is superbly reflective and the animation is most pleasing – having been created with the assistance of members of the UK's own Sheffield Steelers hockey team. Plenty of Gremlin's *Actua* sports magic has been sprinkled onto the game and it shares the same chunky and funky *Actua* players as current soccer supremo *Actua Soccer 2*.

The sound is also set to be something special. A new concept in aural delight called Ambient Realism will be present which will provide the most realistic commentary (from an as yet unnamed puck-watching professional), crowd noises and sound effects yet heard in a hockey game (so say Gremlin, but we'll be the judges of that when we review the game).

As for the all-important gameplay, as always at this early stage our final judgement is reserved, but from the time we've had with this early version, we're happy to report that the game has a very slick feel to it. Despite all the fancy animations, the game shows no signs of sluggishness and the players are extremely responsive. The game's fluidity and intuitive controls also make it very easy to keep track of your players and as a result, accurate passing and shooting quickly becomes second nature. All in all it's looking very chipper.

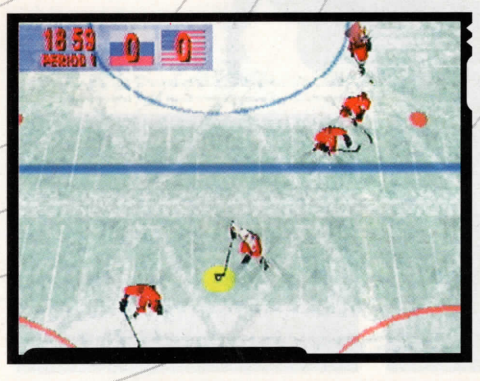


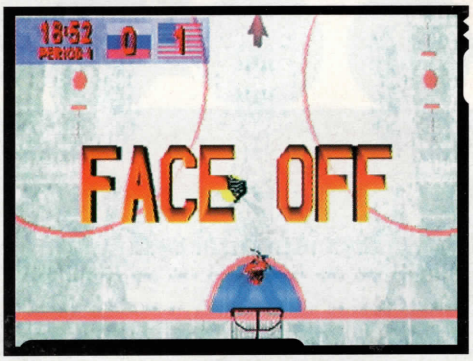


The responsiveness of the players is impressive considering how well animated they are. Very clever.

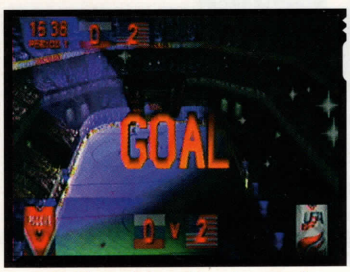
Another potential fracas kicking off.

Information	
From:	Gremlin
Available:	Late February



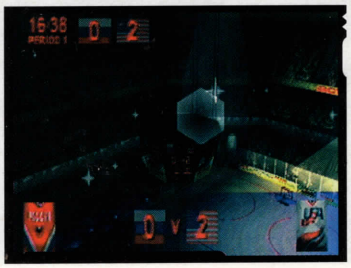


When you score a goal, you get treated to a pretty light show.



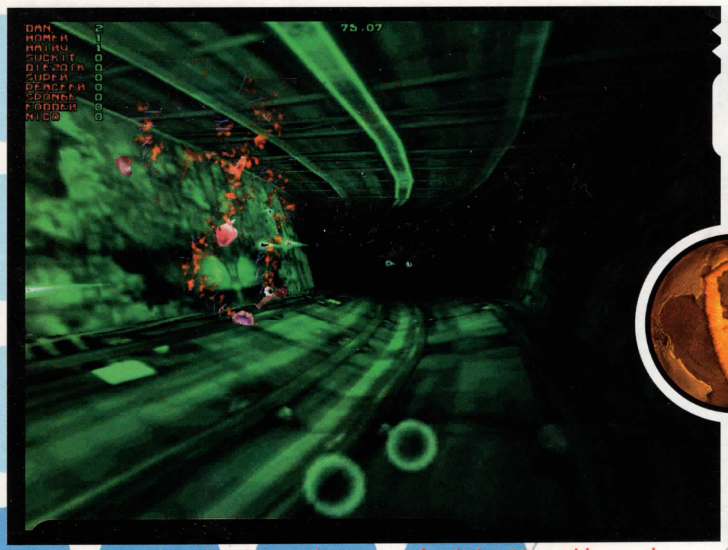
And here it is, still going on. In fact it goes on for quite a while.

A bit too long if the truth be known. It'll be over soon.



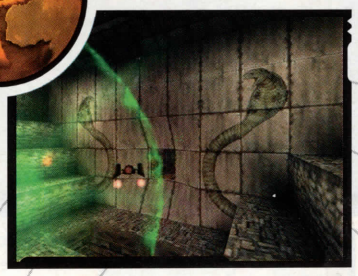
Oh for crying out loud, get on with it. You can't even skip it.

What's that up ahead? Who cares, shoot if anyway.



The game takes place in complex mazes of twisting 3D corridors and chambers and certainly owes old classic *Descent* a debt of thanks.

Why do apocalyptic future worlds have to look so drab? Oh...



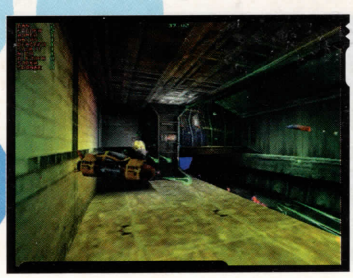
Fed up of 3D shooters yet? OF COURSE NOT! There's plenty of life in the old dog yet and industry old hands Acclaim and Probe's effort could be one of the games of '98.

Words: Sean Atkins

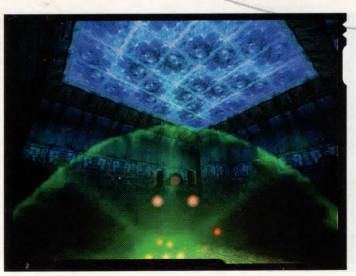
Forsaken

The forecast is getting worse. Previously, the future of earth – according to dozens upon dozens of videogames – has been painted very bleakly indeed. But mostly it's been simply rising crime rates and corrupt mega-corporations that have been to blame. Now Acclaim's new 3D shooter, *Forsaken*, takes the concept of approaching gloom a little further. This time around, a huge shockwave has destroyed abso-bloody-lutely

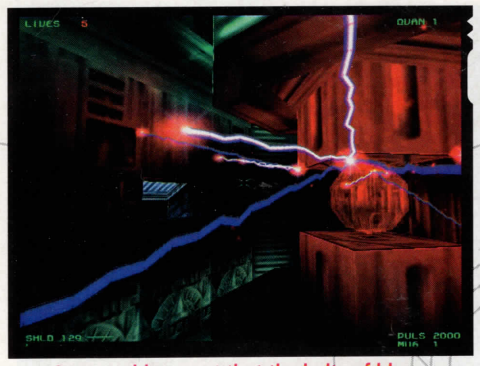
It's a mix of racing and blasting as you, mounted on your mad Pioncycle, zip about gathering power-ups and cash while battling with your rivals.



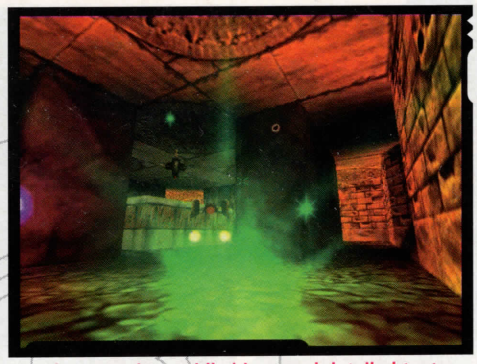
The moody scenery helps build the kill or be killed atmosphere.



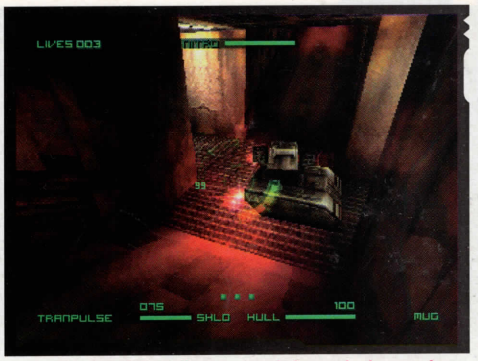
Best get used to quality lighting effects like this 'un. There's loads!



One would suspect that the bolts of blue electricity are particularly harmful. Scarper!

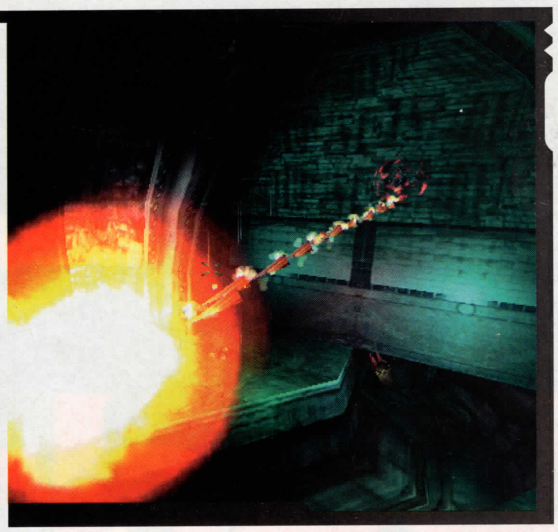


The game is stupidly hi-res and detailed texture-mapping stops the scenery being repetitive.

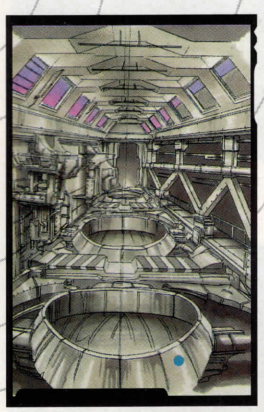


It'll take skill to fly at speed through the nooks and crannies without making a gump of yourself.

Not all your foes are airborne, there are tank-like ground targets to strafe and bomb too.



No shots of the two-player mode yet but hopefully it won't compromise too much of the fab detail.



One of the proposed in-game chambers.

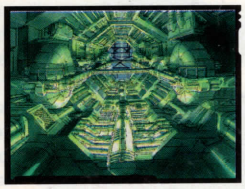
everything leaving the earth a barren husk. Out of this devastation emerges a society of scavengers who pootle around the debris on Pioncycles, rummage around for food and blow each other to smithereens at the drop of a hat.

The game takes place over 12 levels but variety comes not only from the different levels but more from the range of cycles available. Each has its own distinct characteristics. Couple with this the potential arsenal of 25 different weapons and you're looking at a pretty interesting scrap. Top weapon has to be the remote control missile, where you steer the brute to it's target via a camera on its nose. And, as you would expect these days, there's a top two-player, split-screen deathmatch mode in there too. Top.

So the gameplay is certainly heading in the right direction and better still, it seems that, if the programmers are to be believed, *Forsaken* will set a new standard in 3D visuals. Sure, they always say that don't they? But in fairness, the bits we've seen look stunning. Refreshingly, Acclaim aren't spouting about revolutionary new 3D engines with long complex names but are simply offering up screenshots and video of the game in action to prove their point. The environments are exquisitely detailed with some of the best texture-mapping we've seen and at this stage it seems to shift around not only very smoothly but at nose-bleed inducing speed. There are also some amazing lighting effects in evidence as the twisting tunnels are lit up by passing missiles and so on.

And to complete the package, the developers have also taken pains to get the aural experience just right too. There's a completely original drum 'n' bass soundtrack to make those frantic battles that bit more manic. Also, there will be a 3D panning sound system in there, but at this stage it's unclear whether that will come in the form of Dolby Surround (the current standard) or some other 3D system such as Q-Sound. We'll see.

Either way, if the gameplay really does deliver the goods, Acclaim, in a startling return to form, look to have one of the most promising new titles of '98 on their hands. The review is some way off yet, but we'll strive to give a more up to date version a good going over in time to bring you some more solid information very soon.



Because programmers have no idea what looks nice, artists have knocked up lovely pictures as suggestions for the in game guff. Very nice.

Incoming flaming fireballs in your area.

See how the lasers light up the walls?

Information	
From:	Acclaim
Available:	Late April

It seems William Tell's got his face on postage stamps these days.

Collate an impressive band of skilled warriors and wise magical people so that you can avoid a painful stuffing from the evil Dread King.

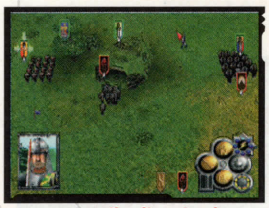
An old favourite is back and if you believe the hype, it's seriously glammed up. The battle for Warhammer world has kicked off again.

Words: Daniel Griffiths

Dark Omen

You could call it the Kylie MInogue of the games world. *Dark Omen* is the product of years of tinkering and fine tuning an idea, with the end result being a stylish version of its former self. It's a tad more accessible too, since you don't have to hang around Games Workshops or even own a PC to get a piece of the action any more. What started life as a humble board game can now proudly flaunt 32,000 colour 3D graphics, a particle graphics system, some real-time 3D lighting and some shadow effects, all thanks to the PlayStation. Beyond that, it can stake its claim to being the only true 3D arcade/strategy game currently available as we went to press.

The original game has, in fact, already graced our fair console in the shape of *Warhammer: Shadow of the Horned Rat* (still the longest and most preposterous game name we know) but this souped up version promises even more excitement than the *Horn*, with an enhanced battle engine driven by superior artificial intelligence. Lah de dah... You can now do battle in two-player link-up, with a new context-sensitive



A cannily disguised underground bunker...

What a lovely neat horse formation. You don't see that every day

They're dropping like flies out there in the field. It's not pretty.

Looks a bit like school assembly. But with armour and shields.

Come home to a real fire. Some sod's gone and torched it.

This charming country cottage seems to be a strategic military target.

The first casualty of war is not the truth but he who freezes his nadgers off.

Looks like your rebel army has completed a mission amidst this snowy wilderness.

The tension's mounting as the mighty final confrontation draws nearer...

interface and a 3D line-of-sight system where giving orders and understanding the complex on-screen action are both now a breeze.

There's more interaction with the landscape around you too, with the terrain playing a larger part in battle strategy than before and, for added ambience, the soundtrack to your virtual life changes according to the action of the moment. In quieter moments you'll get a chilled out string pad while heated battles break out the castle rocking beats.

So what's it all about? Well, you are Commander Morgan Bernhardt, leader of a mercenary army facing the Dread King's gruesome mass of Zombie soldiers and Greenskin raiders. Brrr. In order to stop them decimating the whole of the Warhammer world, you must make frequent choices about when and where to fight them, and who to recruit into your fighting force. This means plot development is entirely dependent on how you manage your army and each game of *Dark Omen* will take you in new directions.

It's essentially *C&C* with more serious wargaming overtones. You must prevent the Dark Forces moving towards the Dread King before they get the chance to join his army. To uncover their secrets you'll need to enlist the help of various powerful allies and their armies such as the Archers, the Cannons, the Cavalry, Infantry and the Magic forces. Wizards, War Machines and Monsters will also come in handy in your quest.

So, if you like your strategy games with the subtle whiff of 'Orc' this could be just the ticket.

The forces of good plot strategic battle advancement. Of course they could just be huddling football style and chanting to psyche each other up.

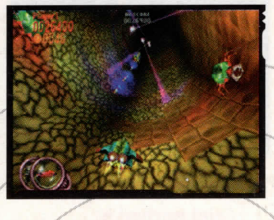
Death and destruction abound. It's a tough job...

Information

From:	EA
Available:	Late February

It certainly looks stunning in stills but what they can't convey is the amazingly smooth movement of the complex graphical trickery within.

The tunnels aren't just round and warp into different shapes as you hurtle down them.

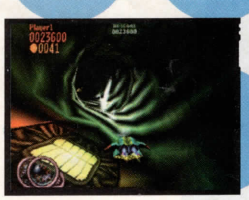


It's certainly a colourful brute. Here's hoping the visual flash won't obscure the game too much.

Words : Will Groves

N2O

Like Square's forthcoming *Einhander*, Gremlin's *N2O* takes familiar old-skool blasting and drags it screaming into the PlayStation nineties.

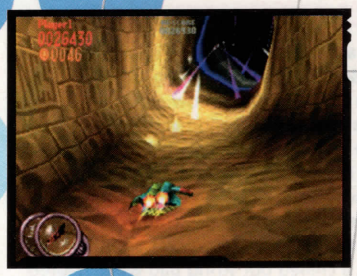


There are plenty of different enemies to ensure plenty of variety.

Written by a guy called Tony Crowther (a legendary programmer of top shoot-'em-ups back in the days of the Commodore 64) *N2O* is a new super-fast blaster from Gremlin. The game takes place in a series of tunnel like levels (of which there are 30) and the idea is, well, you shoot stuff.

The developers wanted to create a game that draws its inspiration from the old classics of the eighties and yet utilises every last ounce of the PlayStation's power and it looks like they might have succeeded. In a sort of *Tempest*-like way (for it's from *Tempest* that *N2O* steals most of its inspiration) the player's craft hurtles around the walls of the tunnel letting fly with all manner of weaponry detroying a vast range of enemies that emerge from the darkness down the end. The game certainly won't be taxing the minds of those that play it with the controls kept very basic and all weapons easily selected at speed in order to deliver some unparalleled shooting thrills. The most amazing thing about the game though is that not only is it super fast, it also contain some of the most amazing graphics and lighting effects that we've ever seen. The tunnels shine with the colours of whichever weapon you fire down it and the explosions are terrifically good. We'll review it soon and let you know if the '80s flavour gameplay can hack it in '98. P

Information	
From:	Gremlin
Available:	Early April



See the searchlights of the craft up ahead as they loom out of the dark?

It takes on a trippy, almost organic feel from time to time. Very strange.

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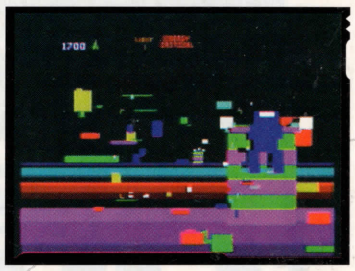
Joust 2 and *Splat* are pointless exercises in futility. So there.

Aaaah, *Spy Hunter*. In the days when Knight Rider ruled the roost and the Dukes of Hazard were hip, this little number was *very* popular...



Blaster (top) was ahead of its time, alas *Moon Buggy* was not.

Join us as we don our drainpipe jeans, kick back to some Shakin' Stevens and reminisce over these timeless classics of a bygone era. Or perhaps not...

Words: Dan Griffiths

Arcade's Greatest Hits 2
The Midway Collection 2

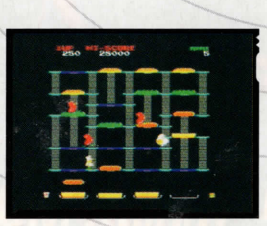
You've just crashed in *Blaster*. Not impressive.

Let's put things into perspective here. 1984 is modern history. It had fashion which'll never be recycled, a Prime Minister with a handbag and men dressed like girls. Yet in terms of the cultural gatecrasher that is videogaming, the early eighties represents the Ice Age of gaming, smirked at these days by everyone but the oldest of crumblies. And quite right too.

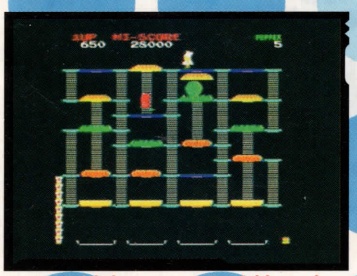
Start up the Stannah chairlift for here comes *Midway's Arcade's Greatest Hits 2*! The sequel to *William's Greatest Hits* this time features seven dodgy Midway relics, boasting simple, addictive gameplay, where the joy of playing something so basic and naff overrides the fact that the games look terrible. What's more the controls aren't nearly sensitive enough and you can't make head (nor tail) of the coloured blobs on the screen. Which, incidentally, is fine if you're partaking in a end-of-the-night, waiting-for-a-taxi quick bash on *Space Invaders* but in the comfort of your own home on a crisp new PlayStation disc? Forget it – it ain't worth the sore thumbs.

Of the guff on offer *Spy Hunter* stands head and shoulders above the rest. You hare along an open road, blasting motorbikes into shrapnel and avoiding evil tyre-slashers. The McJob from hell awaits you with either *Burger Time* (not thrilling) or *Root Beer Tapper*, the latter being surprisingly absorbing. No bar on earth is as hectic as this one and no barman as overworked and yet smash a glass and you've had it. *Blaster* sees you flying through space in a blocky retake of the Doctor Who credits, shooting flying saucers and rescuing spacemen. *Moon Patrol* has you chugging your buggy over bumpy lunar terrain against an endlessly repeating roll of backdrop, while *Joust 2* is just appalling and *Splat* worse.

Those requiring a shot of nostalgia, evoking memories of Spandau Ballet and the miners' strike need look no further.

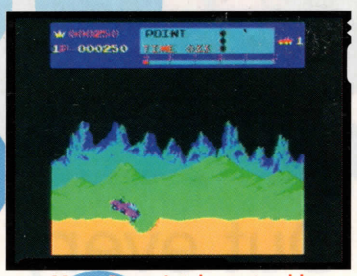


Information	
From:	GT Interactive
Available:	March '98



Avoid that nasty Mr Pickle and you might just make a top burger.

Two pints when you're ready. And don't expect a tip either...



Moon Buggy's taken a tumble and there's sod all you can do.

Splat seems to revolve around a food fight but it's hard to tell...

There's something you don't see every day – a one-handed cartwheel on a snow board.

Nothing like cutting some air through a V-shaped valley on a clear winter morning.

Oh it's cool, alright. Cooler than *Cool Boarders 2* and more chilled than a Fosters Ice. Or so Eidos would have us believe. But is it any good?

Words: Sean Atkins

Chill

Since Jay Kay showed the MTV generation that a lot of fun could be had sliding down icy slopes on a piece of wood, the totally wedged up art of snowboarding has achieved remarkable popularity. For those who can't swim or don't fancy breaking their faces on hard concrete when they fall on their arse, the softer, if damper, option of snow makes a lot more sense.

Now Eidos has joined the current band of software floggers exploiting the trend but claim to be putting a freestyle spin on their new and decidedly different offering. *Chill* (that's its name) puts even more emphasis on showing off and potentially neck-breaking stunts than Sony's hotly tipped *Cool Boarders 2*. The people at Silicon Dreams have created 50 slopes, threaded around five mountains, with some hidden ski jump and avalanche-avoiding levels tucked away in there too. There are three different boards and boarders to play the slopes with, as you work your way up from the easier levels to the death defying drops you face as a super chilled boarder.

You'll jump buildings, trees, fences and even frozen bovines as you take the plunge downwards, and armed with a nifty playback feature you can admire yourself in mid-stunt over these farmyard animals at a later point. Eidos promise a frame rate of 30 per second and massive tracks provided via the black art of data streaming (loading during play), as well as a two-player mode offering both split-screen and link-up options. And as if that wasn't enough it's analogue compatible as well.

The graphics are beautifully crisp and tasty, with night-time scenes being particularly neat with a choice snowflake showers and shimmering, scuffed up snow flying out behind you. Get ready to don your Stussy gear and throw yourself down a mountain soon.

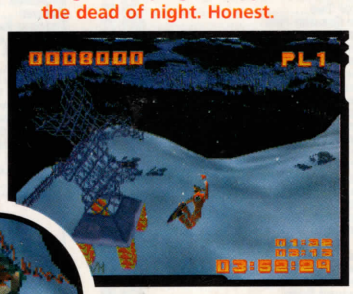
In the absence of frozen cows...

Information	
From:	Eidos
Available:	Early April

To earn the coveted title of the most "chilled" boarder in the valley, death-defying leaps like this one should not pose a problem. Hide your fear.

You know things are getting hairy when you can't *see* the track...

It's great leaping over pylons in the dead of night. Honest.



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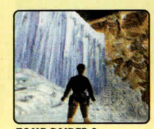
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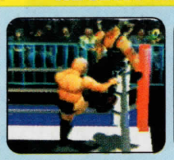

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Actua Ice Hockey.....23RD JANUARY
Actua Tennis.....29TH MAY
Aironauts.....MARCH
Apache Longbow.....FEBRUARY
Auto Destruct.....
Broken Helix.....MID JANUARY
Bugriders.....28TH JANUARY
Herc's Adventure.....DECEMBER
K-1 The Arena Fighters.....MID JANUARY
Killing Time.....FEBRUARY
Mace.....29TH JANUARY
Metal Gear Solid.....END JANUARY
Midnight Run.....MID JANUARY
Nagano Winter Olympics.....MID JANUARY
NBA Hangtime.....29TH JANUARY
NHL Open Ice.....16TH JANUARY
Other Life Azure Dreams.....MID JANUARY
Premier Manager '98.....
Pro Pinball Timeshock.....22ND JANUARY
San Francisco Rush.....29TH JANUARY
Screamer 2.....FEBRUARY
Snow Racer.....FEBRUARY
WCW Nitro.....END JANUARY
Wrecking Crew.....MID JANUARY

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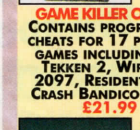

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41 PAGES OF REVIEWS

POWER PLAY

Finished!
The final parts of *Red Alert* and *Crash Bandicoot 2*

Small Tips 73
C&C: Red Alert, Part 2 76
Crash Bandicoot 2, Part 2 80

PowerPlay Tips

Before embarking upon the hefty task of completing *Red Alert* and *Crash Bandicoot 2* with the aid of our solutions, why not relax with this massive selection hints, tips and cheats we've compiled this month...

Final Fantasy VII

We've had loads of phone calls about breeding Chocobos so here a rundown of how it all works.

You need to get a Great Chocobo from the southern continent. You also need to get a Good Chocobo from the Gold Saucer area. Breed these with a Carub Nut to get a Blue Chocobo. You can get a Carub Nut by killing the Red Dragons which are to be found in the green patches of the Northern Continent.

Next race your Good Chocobo and Great Chocobo in the Chocobo Races. When they're up to A Class, breed them again with a Carub Nut and guess what? You now have a Green Chocobo.

Get back to the races and this time race the Blue and Green Chocobos to get them up to A Class. Breed them with a Carub Nut and you'll get a Black Chocobo. Find out whether it's male or female then go to the Northern Continent. You now need to catch a Wonderful Chocobo that is the opposite sex to the one you've bred. Once you have one, take them both to the races and get them up to A Class. Now breed them with a Zeio Nut and you will get the elusive Gold Chocobo.

Actua Soccer 2

Enter the following cheats at the main menu. Enter them again to switch them off.

TOGGLE GREMLIN 11
LEFT, RIGHT, SQUARE, CIRCLE, UP, DOWN, SQUARE, CIRCLE

TOGGLE SFA
LEFT, LEFT, SQUARE, RIGHT, RIGHT, CIRCLE, UP, DOWN

TOGGLE GHOSTBALL
SQUARE, SQUARE, LEFT, LEFT, RIGHT, RIGHT, CIRCLE, CIRCLE

TOGGLE BEACHBALL
LEFT, RIGHT, LEFT, UP, LEFT, RIGHT, SQUARE, SQUARE

TOGGLE DWARVES
CIRCLE, DOWN, DOWN, SQUARE, UP, UP, LEFT, RIGHT

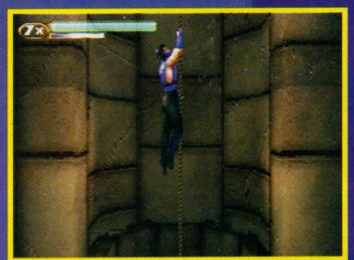
TOGGLE GIANTS
UP, DOWN, DOWN, RIGHT, SQUARE, SQUARE, CIRCLE, CIRLCE

TOGGLE FLOODLIGHT FAILURE
LEFT, LEFT, LEFT, CIRCLE, RIGHT, RIGHT, RIGHT, SQUARE

TOGGLE INVISIBLE PLAYERS
SQUARE, CIRCLE, DOWN, CIRCLE, UP, RIGHT, SQUARE, LEFT

TOGGLE MONO/COLOUR TV MODE
UP, DOWN, UP, SQUARE, CIRCLE, UP, DOWN, UP

MK Mythologies



Enter these codes on the password screen to get the desired results. Couldn't be simpler.

Password	Effect
NXCVSZ	Unlimited urns
GTTBHR	1000 lives
GRVDTS	View credits
ZCHRRY	Ultimate Cheat

NOTE: Regarding the Ultimate Cheat. Transport to Level 8 Shinnok's Fortress. If you die before you reach a checkpoint, press L1 to fight Quan Chi or L2 to fight Shinnok.

FATALITY
When you fight the three nasty fishwife women in Quan Chi's fortress, you can do the headrip fatality on Kia with F, D, F & HP.

LEVEL 1 FINISHING MOVE
At the end of stage one when you defeat the boss, (Scorpion), it will say FINISH HIM!! To perform the head rip fatality move one step away and motion Forward, Down, Forward, High Punch on the control. Then watch as Subbie tears of Scorpions head sending blood everywhere.

PASSWORDS

Level	Password
2	THWMSB
3	CNSZDG
4	ZVRKDM
5	JYPPHD
6	QFTLWN
7	XJKNZT

To view the Earth Boss Exploding enter "rckmnd" at the password screen. Simple eh?
With the following cheats, pause the

MDK

game while playing then enter the cheats you require.

BONUS AIRSTRIKE
DOWN, UP, CIRCLE, DOWN, UP, DOWN, L1.

COW DROP
UP, DOWN, DOWN, L1, RIGHT.

DUMMY DECOY
CROSS, L1, RIGHT, CIRCLE, CROSS, UP, SQUARE.

HAND GRENADE
TRIANGLE, CIRCLE, SQUARE, SQUARE, L1, RIGHT.

HOMING SNIPER GRENADE
LEFT, UP, CROSS, TRIANGLE, L1, L1, RIGHT.

MORTAR
LEFT, L1, TRIANGLE, SQUARE, RIGHT, CIRCLE, LEFT, LEFT.

INTERESTING BOMB
DOWN, RIGHT, CIRCLE, CIRCLE, LEFT, LEFT, UP, SQUARE, TRIANGLE.

SNIPER GRENADE
UP, SQUARE, L1, LEFT, CIRCLE, TRIANGLE, SQUARE.

SUPER CHAIN GUN
LEFT, L1, DOWN, SQUARE, TRIANGLE, UP, DOWN.

THUMPER WEAPON
DOWN, UP, LEFT, LEFT, TRIANGLE, UP, RIGHT, DOWN.

TWISTER WEAPON
DOWN, L1, SQUARE, TRIANGLE, RIGHT, UP, X.

LEVEL SELECT
At the title screen press LEFT, CIRCLE, TRIANGLE, UP, and SQUARE to make the level select option appear.

Test Drive 4

BONUS CARS AND MIRROR TRACKS
To unlock reversed tracks enter your name as KNACKED

UNLOCK FOUR BONUS CARS
For a Viper GTS-R, '69 Dodge Daytona, TVR 12/7Project and Pitbull Special enter your name as SAUSAGE.

NOTE: To use these codes you must be fast enough to have your time entered on the high score screen (make sure to turn checkpoints on from OPTION screen). The easiest way to do this is to go to the drag race and pick the Jaguar as your car. Run the race and then quit. If you are fast enough, it will ask for your name. Enter one of the codes. If you have the music turned off, you will hear the announcer shout "GO!". After entering the codes make sure you save your game to the memory card. Otherwise, you will have to run this each time you play.

Cool Boarders 2

ALL TRACKS
To gain access to all the tracks without having to race, perfect your fakies or fall over and get your bum wet go to the track select screen then highlight the following options in turn for four seconds apiece.

Snow Boarding Combined
1 Make Jump
Free Ride
Option
Board Park
Half Pipe
Free Ride

Next press CIRCLE, go to 1+2 Player and hold down L1, L2, R1, R2+CIRCLE

PLAY AS AN ALIEN OR SNOWMAN
Complete all 100 moves in Master mode and break all the records in Free Ride mode.

SECRET BOARDS
Enter Free Ride mode with all the tracks and break all the records.

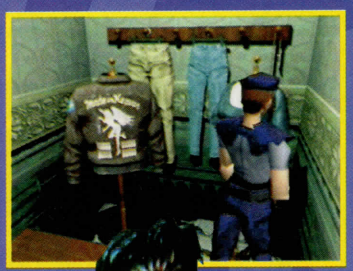
MIRROR MODE
When you have all the tracks press R1+CIRCLE on Free Ride mode.

ALTERNATIVE OUTFITS
Highlight Snow Boarding Combined and press DOWN, R1, UP, R1, DOWN, R2, UP, R2, UP, UP, R1, DOWN, DOWN, R2

Resident Evil DC

LOTS OF STUFF
At the game select screen highlight Advanced and press and hold RIGHT. It should turn green. When you play you'll find you have double the amount of every item you collect.

SKILL LEVELS ON THE RE2 DEMO
On the Resi 2 demo highlight New Game and press and hold RIGHT. You now have access to Normal and Rookie modes.



Frogger

INFINITE LIVES
Press pause then hit RIGHT, SQUARE, TRIANGLE, SQUARE, TRIANGLE, CROSS

ANY LEVEL
Pause the game and hit RIGHT, SQUARE, TRIANGLE, SQUARE, TRIANGLE, R1, L1, R1, L1, CIRCLE

Fighting Force

CHEAT MENU
Press and hold LEFT+SQUARE+L1+R2 at the main menu. Cheat Mode should appear on-screen. Go to options and you'll be able to choose invincibility and select any stage you want. Top stuff!

Pandemonium 2

INVINCIBILITY
Enter your password as NEVERDIE and you'll be invincible.

LEVEL SELECT
Enter your password as OCMCKKEJ and play any level you like.

Crash Bandicoot 2

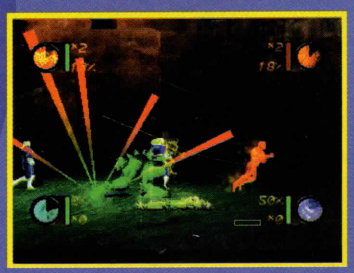
BOSS WARP
Stand on the middle platform of a warp room and press L1+L2+R1+R2+TRIANGLE to warp to the next or previous Boss.

FIRST LEVEL SKIP
On the first level, pause the game and go to the warp room and you will skip the level.

SECRET LEVEL
On the "Unbearable" level, when the second bear falls off the bridge, go back and jump into the space where he fell. This takes you to a level with blokes firing guns at you.

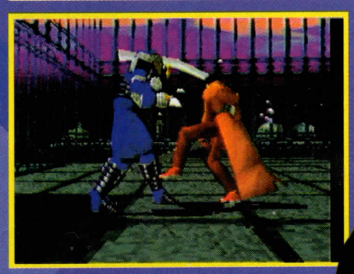
Fantastic Four

ACCESS ALL OPTIONS
At the main menu select Options then highlight Training Mode. Now press L1+R1+L2+R2. You will access a secret options menu.



Toshinden 3

HIDDEN CHARACTERS
Select level 0 difficulty and play through the whole game with each character. You'll then have all the counterparts. Next change the game to level five difficulty and beat the game with Vermilion to get Sho. Change the difficulty to level six and play through with Vermilion again to get Abel. Next change the difficulty to level seven and play through with Abel to get Veil. Leave the difficulty on level seven and beat the game with Veil to get Naru.



MOVE CAMERA
Go to the Key Configure screen and place the cursor on any of the L or R buttons. Press L1+L2+R1+R2. The L and R buttons should now control the camera view. There's no zoom option.

Tomb Raider 2

ALL WEAPONS
1) Get on a flat surface then:
2) Sidestep left, sidestep right, sidestep left.
3) Step back then step forwards.
4) Turn around three times.
5) Jump backward and flip by pressing SQUARE +CIRCLE together.

EXPLODING LARA
While playing, hold the WALK button and sidestep Left, then Right, then Left, then step Forward, then step Backwards. Then turn Lara around three times in any direction, then jump forward and while in the air press the ROLL button.

GOODBYE BUTLER
Tired of the pesky butler following you around everywhere in Lara's home? Walk into the kitchen and open the freezer, go inside and wait for the butler to arrive. Once he comes in jump over him and close the door behind you. The poor old sod'll freeze to death.

HANDSTAND
When Lara is hanging from a ledge, hold the WALK button and press UP to do a handstand.

LEVEL SKIP
1) As before, get on a flat surface where you can jump.
2) Sidestep left, sidestep right, sidestep left.
3) Hold R1 and move backwards then forwards ~ release R1.
4) Turn around three times.
5) Then Jump forward and press Circle in the air.

Welcome back to the blood-stained world of *Command and Conquer: Red Alert*. In this, the second and final part of our guide we turn our attention to the Allied missions. Guiding you by the hand through each and every one of them. Good luck!

COMMAND & CONQ

Mission 1

Password
NONE

An easy one to start with. First, you must shoot all the enemy that are in sight, and then use Tanya to kill any enemy that you see, grenadiers first. Destroy any remaining enemy infantry, and Einstein will then flee the Tech Centre. Now it's a good idea to move him and Tanya to the helicopter in the north. That's all you have to do to complete the first mission. On to the next one.

Mission 2

Password
LZ95EMPBB

Spread your men around your base to defend it. Then build a refinery and base defences. Follow the road south with some infantry and jeeps, and kill any enemy you see, grenadiers first. Then destroy the enemy ore truck and move into the enemy base. Kill any men you see, and then go north and kill the units there. Now go back to the enemy base and destroy the buildings and the convoy will arrive.

Mission 3

Password
BE2D93ASU

Move gun-toting Tanya down to take out the enemy soldier with the medic, and then shoot any soldiers attacking the poor lass. Use the medic to heal Tanya if she's hurt then move her west and southwards and shoot any enemy you come across. Kill the transport that lands, and use Tanya to kill the enemy around the flame tower. Good isn't she? Now use the artillery to destroy the flame tower from long range. Move east and then north and shoot any barrels you see, including the ones by the hostile V2. Destroy the first bridge you find and shoot the barrels by the bridge at the top of the screen to destroy that. Now blow up any more bridges you find along the way. Job done.

Mission 4

Password
9BFD73QU

Build a radar dome, and a weapons factory and start building tanks. Quickly train rocket infantry to guard

THE SOVIET MISSIONS

UER: RED ALERT

your base from enemy aircraft. Now send your tanks to the north and take out the ore truck, and then the enemy tanks and men. Now move into their base, destroying the flame turrets and any men you see. Once they're killed, you're free to destroy all of their buildings.

Mission 5

Password
VM66XSCYO

Be patient, and watch the enemy patrols. Then move the spy into the weapons factory, to hijack a truck, which will take you down to the prison. The spy will release Tanya, so use her to slowly take out any nearby enemy dogs first. Then destroy all four SAM sites and any other buildings she's near, and you'll get some reinforcements at the top of the map. Use your engineers to capture the construction yard, and start

building a refinery and some tanks. When you've got enough tanks, kill all the enemy, starting with their ore trucks. V2s are handy against tesla coils and flame towers. Use all your army to destroy all of the remaining enemy resistance.

Mission 6

Password
BVX2QW5LV

Deploy your MVC and get yourself a base going as soon as you can. Be aware of attacking enemy, and build defences accordingly, with rocket men

defending against aerial attacks. Using some tanks, take out the small base to the south, send a spy into the radar dome, and capture the barracks. Send tanks southwards to protect your coast from invaders, and build a naval yard and plenty of ships. Move slightly south west in a transporter and land some spies to look into to the tech centre and sub pen. Now land as many tanks and ships as you can in this area, taking out first the defences, and then every other building, vehicle and man.

Mission 7

Password
LHD9CWV14

Kill any enemy you see, and deploy the MVC. Keep your base well defended with rocket soldiers and a few pillboxes, and get your ore trucks to collect as much cash as possible. Send some tanks south, take out the small resistance there and capture the

radar dome. Keep plenty of tanks here, and destroy the enemy ore trucks using mines. Now head west, and systematically destroy all the opposition you see. Build some ships to scout the map and destroy any subs and sub pens you find. Destroy all the enemy to complete the mission.

Mission 8

Password
R2PH9KYB7

Move your vehicles to the base, protecting your MVC, and deploy it. Put your ships next to the

power stations, and start building some rocketeers and tanks to defend the base from all attacks. Watch out for enemy landing on the eastern coastline. Lay mines around the entrances to your base, and be ready for enemy attacks from all sides. Keep laying mines and defending your weak points until the timer runs out.

Mission 9

Password
K1RD0NDMJ

Move east and build your base next to the ore. Start producing some rocket infantry, and group them to defend against air attacks. Build some tanks and guard your beaches. Then, transport a spy to the top right of the screen. Move your spy into your foe's base, and send him into the building. You'll now have Mr Kosygin with you, so keep him northwards, away from the dogs that appear. Send a few men or tanks to destroy the dogs, and get the defector to the transporter. Take him back to the base.

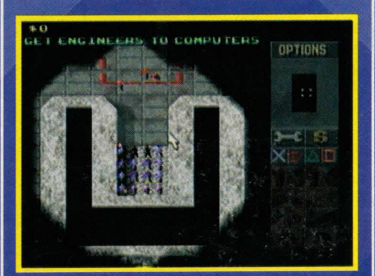
Mission 10

Password
BI83IZVAM

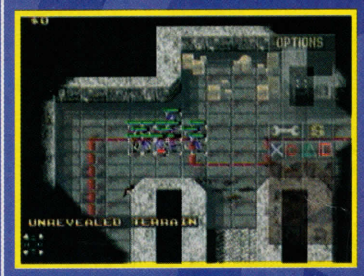
Deploy your MVC to the east, and patrol the area with your tanks pick off any stragglers but run away from any big trouble. Like a girl. Build a tech centre, and destroy enemy ore trucks with choppers. Now gather lots of ore and get building. Keep your base defended, using your aerial power to destroy enemy units. Move towards the enemy, and take out their defences. Once the tesla coils are down, send some engineers into the control centre. But move quickly!

Mission 11

Password
X9FJHMFLD



Now you're in, quickly move south to the enemy mammoths. Move your spy towards the exit, and Tanya'll show up. Take her and an engineer north east, and take the control centre. Now move west and do the same thing. Bear north, and get Tanya to destroy the flame turret. Now go to the north control centre, and disable that. Then move east and then north to put the final nail in the coffin. Your work here is done.



Mission 12

Password
5RNHTX307

Deploy both MVCs, and build two refineries. Send a few tanks eastwards, and lay mines in the vicinity of the enemy mammoths. With a tech centre in place, build some helicopters, and go take out the enemy ore trucks. Charge the base, capture the construction yard and

weapons factory, and destroy all the rest of the enemy, bar the sub pen, sending a spy there instead. Destroy the other enemy ore trucks that appear, and take out their tesla coils using V2s. Send tanks north and destroy the power stations and the SAM sites. Now fire the sonar pulse, and use V2s and tanks to destroy any subs in the vicinity. Once all the subs are down, you're done.

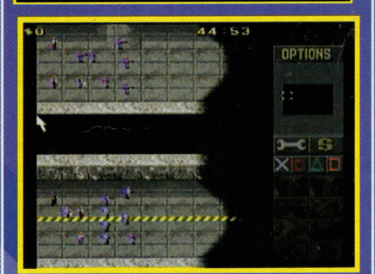
Mission 13

Password
D4IFL9Y73

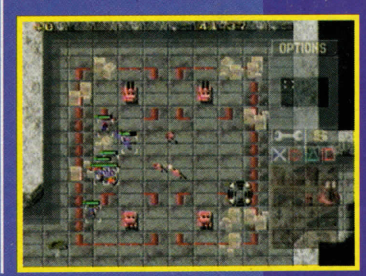
Build your base where you are, and build some pillboxes for defence. Scout east with a jeep and, avoiding the mammoth tanks, shoot the dogs that lie about. Quickly shoot the civilian that comes near, and follow that up by destroying the mammoth too. Keep building your base, and send your spy northwards into the enemy sub pen. Send some choppers to destroy the right hand base's ore trucks, then mine the village path. Attack the left hand base's ore trucks, and then use your helicopters to take advantage of enemy's weak points. Send engineers into the tech centres and tanks to destroy the iron curtain to complete the mission.

Mission 14

Password
9WT8EB77Z



Move the top units of engineers to the nearby control panel, then move the bottom group of men east to kill the enemy there and use the other control panel. Now move the first group of men eastwards past the tanks, and kill any infantry you meet. Go north, and then east to take out another control panel. Move the second platoon south, and kill the grenadier and engineer that stand in your way. Now move an engineer onto to the nearby generator. Keep that group moving east, and blow up the generator in the next room. Keep trekking, until you get to the room full of flame towers. Send engineers onto the control panels to take out their towers, and then move the rest of that pack back to join the original group. Proceed east, to the next generator, and then back to the flame turret room. Kill all the men around you, and then go south and put an engineer on the computer on the west wall. Head west and shoot the barrels and use engineers again to utilise the control panels. Disable the two generators that are situated back in the flame tower room, then move all your units into the southwest passage. Take out the last generator to complete the mission.



Mission 15

Password
5RNHUTAW7

Quickly move your men (and woman) south, then north again, dodging the barrels. Move west and kill all the enemy there, then move north to the base. Blow up the power plants, and make sure you destroy the truck there. Move thieves to the ore silos to nick the cash, then collect the money that spilled from the van. Deploy your new found MVC next to the flare, and mine the surrounding area. Use rocket men to protect the air strikes. Once you can see the whole map, find destroy the enemy ore trucks making sure you dispose of them all. Now build a Cruiser, and chronoshift it into the southern lake, taking out enemy buildings. Keep doing this, until you crush the enemy there. Then, do the same thing, only this time using the lake in the south east. Once you've destroyed the enemy SAM sites, you can set about crushing the enemy to a pulp, tesla coils first, and you'll have conquered the world.

The Cheats!

These mission guides are all very well, but you want it even easier don't you? Well, fear not, because these codes will not only help you through both sets of missions, but they'll also work in multi-player mode. All you have to do is input these codes using the 'cancel building' button. Each symbol of the code refers to the different team buttons on the sidebar.

Money: Square, Square, Circle, Cross, Triangle, Circle
Nuke: Circle,Cross, Circle, Triangle, Square, Triangle
Win level: Cross, Square, Square, Circle, Triangle, Circle

We're back to finish the game! Here we guide Crash from Warp Room 4 all the way to journey's end in the only *Crash 2* guide you'll ever need. All the gems, all the bosses, it's all here!

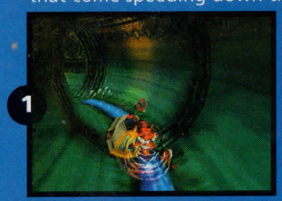
CRASH BANDICOOT 2

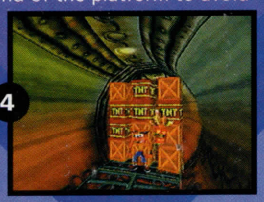
Warp Room 4 CAVE

Hangin' out

Box Gem: Complete secret path.
Secret Area: Backwards in water, drop a floor and walk backwards at end of level onto iceberg.

1. Get ready to spin attack the robots that come speeding down this tunnel. **2.** Grab the extra life from the bottom '?' box then drop down through the hole in the floor. **3.** Don't attempt to spin attack the bugs when making your way along the overhead grate, just avoid them. **4.** Spin into one of the wooden boxes then return to the end of the platform to avoid the explosion. **5.** Keep to the right hand side when jumping these spiky creatures that you'll come across. **6.** Hit this '!' block to detonate the wall of Nitro boxes.





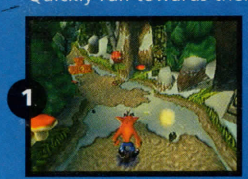
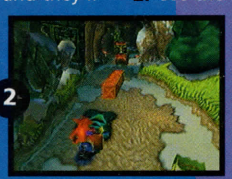
Bonus Area

Use a high jump to reach the top box then do a belly flop to flatten them. **2.** Use the arrow block to bounce over the first Nitro box then do a sliding jump onto the next arrow box. **3.** There's an extra life in the second '?' box above the TNT boxes.

Diggin' it

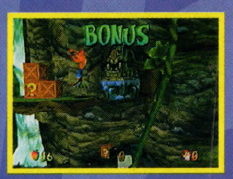
Box Gem: Complete hard path.
Clear Gem: On hard path.

1. These red piranha plants will spit explosive tones as you approach. Quickly run towards them and they'll soon shrivel up but don't attempt jumping or spinning into them. **2.** Use the speed strip to crash through the line of boxes. **3.** You'll need to wait for the beams to drop on this electric fence before passing. **4.** Spin as you pass through the two electric fences to deflect any stones being spat by the plant. **5.** Watch out for the bees just after the set of speed strips, you'll need to use a spin attack to remove them. **6.** Watch out for the pit directly after this electric fence. **7.** When you reach the path with cracks in it, dive under the surface and use pin attacks to remove the red piranha plants. **8.** Use a jump-in spinning attack to deal with these aggressive lumberjacks that you'll come across on your journey.

Bonus Area

Use the arrow block to get one extra life from the ledge above then belly flop on the boxes to get another.



Cold Hard Cash

Box Gem: Take hard path (upper level at Check Point) then backtrack to east path.
Clear Gem: Take hard path.

1. Don't stand on this pillar for too long, it'll fall away. **2.** Use spin attacks to deal with penguins that try to slide down this icy slope. **3.** Use a high jump with a spin to reveal two extra lives at the top of the two tallest pillars. **4.** Only jump across onto the pillar once the penguin on the other side has stopped spinning. **5.** Watch out for double pillars and the icicles just beyond. **6.** Use the bouncing boxes to get an extra life from the top box. **7.** Walk behind this TNT box to make the icicles fall from the ceiling. **8.** Take these boxes to the previous ledge and wait for the hedgehog. When its are spikes down, jump on it. Activate the '!' box. **9.** There's an extra life behind the Nitro boxes. **10.** Wait for the stone wheel to move all the way to the left before jumping across.

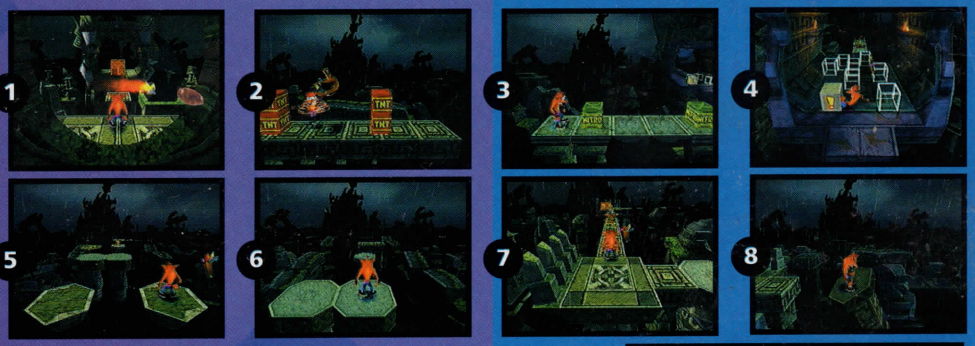
Bonus Area

Follow the trail of wumpa fruit to the bottom ledge. Jump on top this bouncing box for an extra life. At last set of TNT boxes, jump over the first one then jump the rest and onto the '?' tile to return to the previous level.

Ruination

Box Gem: Smash all the boxes .

1. Wait for the flames to die down before jumping across, then collect the extra life from the '?' box. **2.** Don't stand too close to the TNT boxes when attacking the monkey on this platform. **3.** Don't hang around between these Nitro boxes, the floor will soon fall away. **4.** Hit the '!' block to create all the invisible boxes in this chamber. **5.** Use these floating hexagonal platforms to reach the next ledge. **6.** Wait for the monkey to jump from the platform before jumping across. **7.** Get ready to slide attack this lizard once you've jumped the TNT box. **8.** When using these tilting pillars to reach the next platform, keep and eye on Crash's balance to ensure that he doesn't fall off. **9.** Wait here for a rolling log to fall down then quickly make your way across to the other side then spin attack the man throwing them.



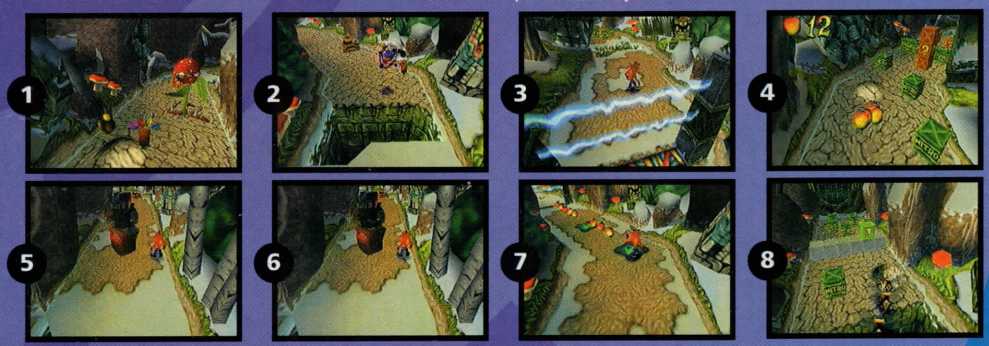
Bonus Area

1. Use a high jump with a spin attack to smash open the top box allowing you to pass. **2.** Jump onto the TNT boxes then perform a high jump over the boxes before they explode and jump onto the next platform.

Bee-Having

Box Gem: Complete Secret Area.
Purple Gem: In Secret Area.

1. As soon as you reach this first red piranha plant, dive under the path for safety. **2.** After the second lumberjack you'll encounter more bee hives. Run past them until you reach the cracked path then dive underneath it for cover. **3.** Run past the next bee hive then slide under the electric fence and keep running to the next cracked path. **4.** Remain under the path and carefully guide Crash between these Nitro boxes then resurface and jump over the line of Nitro boxes, then quickly dive back under the path again. **5.** Wait for this two-faced statue to move to the left of the path before running past. **6.** Quickly jump across the pit and dive under the path to avoid the pesky bees then resurface to deal with the rampant lumberjack. **7.** Use these speed strips to evade the bees but don't forget to slide under the electric fence. **8.** As soon as you jump across to this Nitro box, dive under the path for protection.

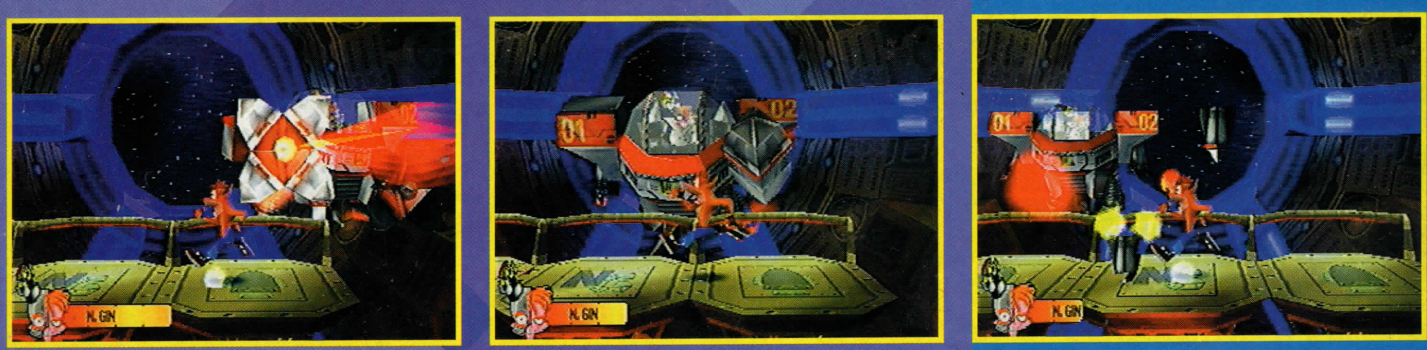


Bonus Area

1. Follow the trail of wumpa fruits around the Nitro boxes to the next ledge. What exactly are wumpa fruit? **2.** Use the boxes to make your way across the Nitro boxes, just don't bounce on them more than once.

Boss - N Gin

For the first part of N. Gin's attack you must throw wumpa fruit into his laser arms when they're open, while dodging his laser attacks. He doesn't like fruit y'see. Weirdo. When both arms have been removed he'll start the second stage of his attack. For the second stage, you must continue to throw fruit at the two red countdown boxes on his shoulders when they're open but this time you need to dodge the falling rockets. When the first countdown box has been destroyed the falling rocket attack will change into bullets that'll fly horizontally across the screen.

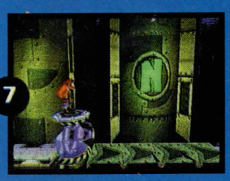


Warp Room 5
SPACE

Piston it Away

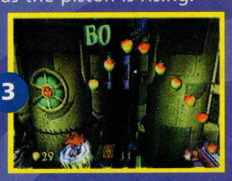
Box Gem: Smash all boxes including hard path.
Clear Gem: Complete hard path.
Secret Area: After 2nd Check Point.

1. Slide attack these robots to get them out your way. **2.** To remove these spiderbots, jump on them when their arms are down or slide attack them when their arms are up. **3.** Use these arrow boxes to smash the boxes above, there's an extra life in one. **4.** There's another extra life in the box behind these Nitro boxes. **5.** Jump over these red hot posts to avoid injury. **6.** Don't stand on these arrow tiles for long as they activate lasers. **7.** Run across this platform of arrow tiles and jump onto the next ledge to avoid the laser. **8.** Use sliding attacks to push these lab assistants off the platforms. **9.** Tread carefully when collecting this extra life.



Bonus Area

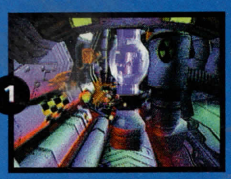
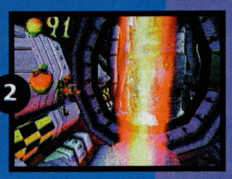
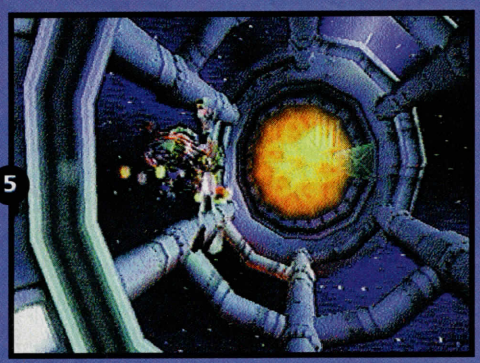
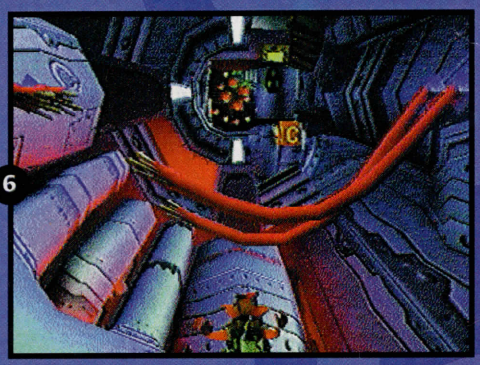
1. Stand on the piston, when it rises jump across to the boxes. **2.** From the second piston, do a sliding jump to clear the Nitro boxes. Don't break the boxes on the other side of them as you'll need then to reach the invisible boxes once activated. **3.** To make it to the end platform, do a sliding jump as the piston is rising.

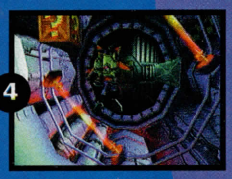


Rock it

Box Gem: Smash all the boxes.

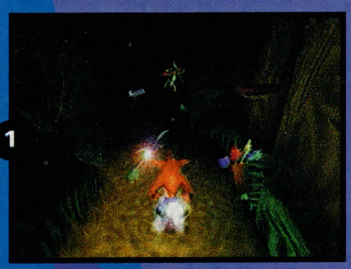
1. Collect the extra life from the second '?' box. **2.** Follow the wumpa fruits around these dangerous red beams. **3.** The four red fire balls must fully expand before you jet through. **4.** Only go between the laser beams after they cross over. **5.** Use spin attacks on the lab assistant when they're not glowing to push them back into the force field. **6.** Keep close to the floor then speed past these loose cables as they rise.

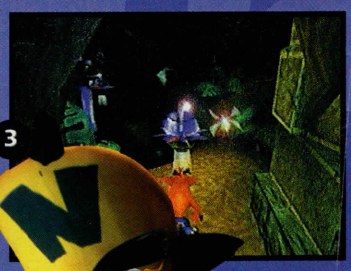







Night Fight

Box Gem: Smash all boxes.
Green Gem: At end of Secret Area.
Secret Area: Jump through dead-end.

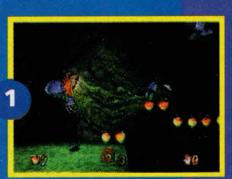


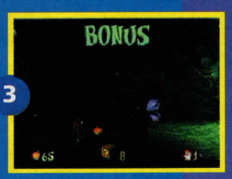


1. You'll need to rely on these fireflies to light your way but remember that they'll not last for long. **2.** There's an extra life in this top box but you'll have to be careful when collecting it. **3.** There's no way of removing these spiky robots, you'll just have to avoid them. **4.** Watch out for the gap just after the Nitro box, it's difficult to see. **5.** Collect all the wumpa fruit from these boxes before persuading the firefly to join you. **6.** You must perform some fast slides to make it under these stacks of Nitro boxes. Best sharpen those reactions.

Bonus Area

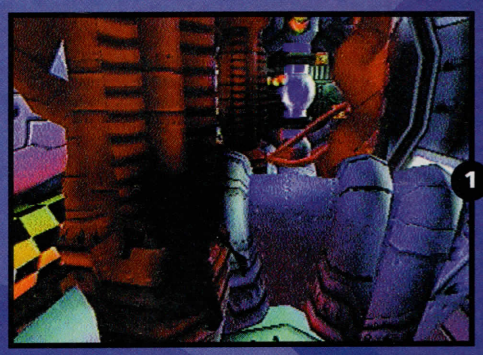
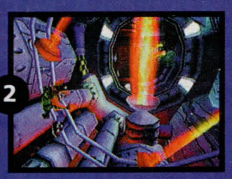
1. Jump up to the firefly to encourage it to guide you. Crash along the ledges. **2.** Use the trail of wumpa fruits to guide you down to the ledge

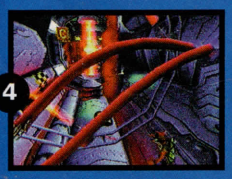
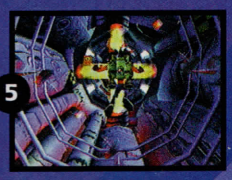




Pac Attack

Box Gem: Smash all the boxes.
Clear Gem: Complete Green Gem path.

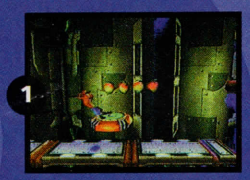



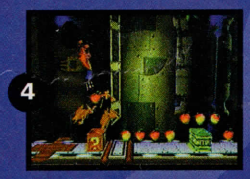
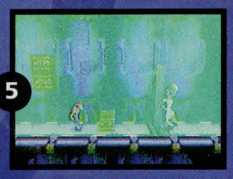
1. Avoid these red hot pipes, they'll burn Crash instantly. **2.** Keep to the left when passing these lasers to avoid the beam in the centre. **3.** Use a steady hand when moving past these fireballs and Nitro boxes. **4.** Move to the right to make it past the loose wires then move over to the left to avoid the hot pipe and beam. **5.** Wait here for the two front beams to cross over then blast your way through. **6.** Keep to the middle of this chamber when approaching the lab assistant. **7.** Pass through the bottom right section of these Nitro boxes once the laser has disappeared.

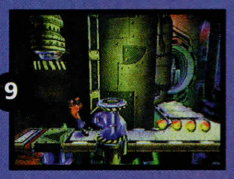
Spaced Out

Box Gem: Complete alternate path.
Clear Gem: Must have all five Gems.

1. Use these hover pads to collect the luscious wumpa fruits and to reach the next platform. **2.** Grab the extra life from the top '?' box before making your way past the deadly pistons. **3.** Jump on the spiderbot to reach the hover pad then perform a high jump to reach the handy extra life above. **4.** There's another extra life in the top '?' box. Get it. **5.** Repeatedly slide into this lab assistant to push him back into the Nitro box and thereby blow his scrawny head off. **6.** Wait for the robot to walk away then use a sliding jump to clear the red hot posts below. **7.** Use a double slide under these pipes to escape the laser that you'll trigger. **8.** Jump over this robot to avoid touching the arrow tile below. **9.** You'll need to jump over this arrow tile to avoid losing a life.

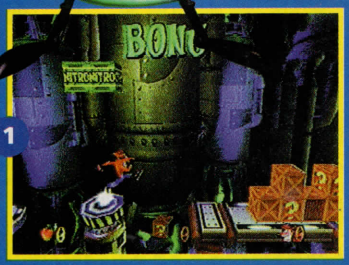
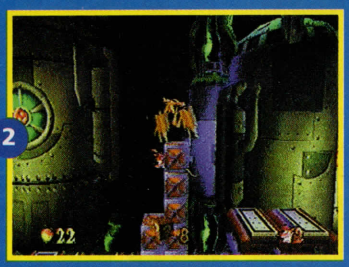




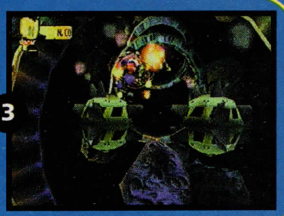
Bonus Area

1. Quickly jump across onto the piston and then onto the opposite platform before you get pushed into the head-roasting Nitro boxes above. **2.** Smash the extra life box clearly on display for a much needed boost then jump onto the first stack of boxes and then onto the second stack before the TNT box explodes. Done that? Well done.

Boss - N Gin

To beat Cortex you must chase him through the tunnel and spin attack into the bugger three times before he makes his escape. Speed after Cortex whilst dodging the boulders and mines but don't worry if you hit any as Cortex will slow up and wait for you. See, not such a bad guy after all.



Secret Warp Rooms

Complete Air Crash then re-enter the level and step on the skull and cross bones tile.

When you reach the end of the level, hit the '!' block then jump across the icebergs to the island.

Complete level then re-enter and belly flop on the red piranha plant on the pillar.

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EVERY GAME EVER REVIEWED & RATED!

LISTINGS

Welcome to Listings

Your indispensable guide to every PlayStation game – UPDATED MONTHLY. New entries, top games, poor games, they're all here and rated out of ten. Tuck in!

How does it work then?

Right Royal Rip-Off!

Every month we send our retail spies into city centres throughout the land to uncover underhand selling-behaviour. There's no escape from our judging eye.

88

Kicking Corner

89

Cutting through the dung like a hot knife through butter, this is where the worst games in the world are listed. Each and every one is a crime against gaming and must be avoided at all costs!

Must Buy!

92

Can't afford a full-price PlayStation title this month? Fear not, Must Buy! guides you through other, less costly, but equally essential PlayStation purchases.

Worth a Look

For your gaming and buying advice, or merely for your titillation, we highlight a PlayStation item that's grabbed our attention.

91

Price Hunter

90

We know only too well that, at times, money can be too tight to mention, and so before your next major purchase we recommend you have a gander in this box 'ere. It's full of the latest bargain buys.

A brief recap of the publisher, the price you ought to be paying and a quick reminder as to what sort of game it is. Look. It's all here.

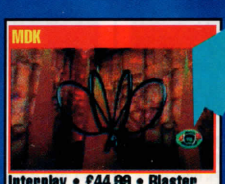
Sony • £44.99 • 3D Platformer

The PlayStation's best platformer – for now. Better looking than the first game, bigger, and packed with clever and bizarre gameplay ideas that keep you glued to the action. Mario beater? No. Again. Shame.

Score 8

New releases are given yellow frames so you can spot them easily amongst the massed throng.

It may be small but it's perfectly formed. A quick and concise review tells you the info you need to know.



Interplay • £44.99 • Blaster

Fast action 3D blasting with a highly original look and well designed hi-tech levels. It's *Doom*-style blasting with *Tomb Raider*-style 3D and a flawless conversion of a huge PC hit. Excellent.

Score 9

A red frame means that this game scores 9 or over and you really ought to buy it. Own all the red frame games for the perfect collection!

PlayStation Power's scores are the only scores you can trust to tell the truth. We praise good games to the skies and kick in the dross.

Namco • £19.99 • Arcade flight

Another arcadey flyer. Average graphics and highly mundane, repetitive, yawnsome gameplay rules here despite its Namco origins. It's a bargain at a Platinum price of £19.99 though.

Score 5

NEW! Now all the £19.99 Platinum games are framed with this silvery edging, making it even easier to spot a red hot bargain.

Remember!
2 = rancid dregs
5 = totally average
7 = good effort
8 = it's a happener
9 = buy it!
10 = perfect

3D Lemmings

Sony • £19.99 • Puzzler

Lemmings in the third dimension, let down by fiddly controls and occasional difficulty in working out just what is going on. Head-bending but rather enjoyable nonetheless. And rather cheap too.

Score 6

Ace Combat 2

Namco • £39.99 • Flight sim

The follow up to *Air Combat*, reviewed over there. *AC2* is jolly good and a marked improvement over the slightly half-baked original but due to it's realism pretensions it's not very much fun.

Score 7

Actua Golf

Gremlin • £34.99 • Golf sim

Brilliant play options, superior views and a blinding commentary by golf God Peter Allis clinch it over the competition. This one time great has just been eclipsed by the even better *Actua Golf 2* below.

Score 8

Actua Golf 2

Gremlin • £44.99 • Golf sim

The best golf game on the PlayStation. An astounding SIX courses meet all the options and 3D free-flying camera antics that you could wish plus the finest commentary of any sports game.

Score 9

Actua Soccer

Gremlin • £19.99 • Footy sim

A fine football game and once red-hot office favourite. It's showing its age now and has been recently stuffed by *ISS Pro*. A bargainous Platinum game though, with great graphics and a top commentary

Score 7

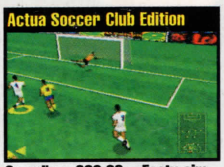
Actua Soccer 2

Gremlin • £44.99 • Footy sim

Yes! Yes! And yes again! The best commentary on any sports game ever, coupled with REAL player names and likenesses. It's the footy fans only choice and it turns in a brilliant one-player game too. Top.

Score 9

Actua Soccer Club Edition



Gremlin • £39.99 • Footy sim

Avoid. It's good ol' *Actua* but with up-to-date premiership teams. It's just a filler while we wait for *Actua 2* rather than a genuinely new game. And it's a waste of time now that original *Actua* is on Platinum.

Score 5

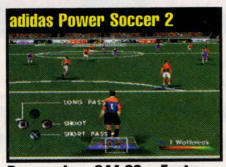
adidas Power Soccer

Psygnosis • £44.99 • Footy

More arcadey than the straight-laced *Actua*, *Power Soccer* adds hot-shot special moves into the footy blend creating a not entirely successful realism/action hybrid. Again, it's aged badly too.

Score 4

adidas Power Soccer 2



Psygnosis • £44.99 • Footy

Stuffed once more by *Actua 2*. This is better than the first game but those stupid special moves still ruin an otherwise accurate soccer sim. Arcadey perhaps but just not as much fun as *ISS* and *Actua 2*.

Score 6

adidas Power Soccer Int '97

Psygnosis • £44.99 • Football

Identical to its predecessor (apart from the perfunctory team changes and some unimportant gameplay tweakings) this is monumentally disappointing second time around. A missed opportunity.

Score 4

Agent Armstrong

Virgin • £39.99 • Shoot-'em-up

A neat little side-scrolling shooter that suddenly pops up 3D bits to tantalise and tease the eye. Bright colourful and fun it brainlessly entertains throughout its many levels without being remarkable.

Score 7

Agile Warrior

Virgin • £39.99 • Arcade flight

A shoot-'em-up thinly disguised as a flight sim. Don't be fooled. The accent is firmly on arcade shooting thrills here across some neat missions but dodgy redraw spoils the otherwise adequate graphics.

Score 5

Air Combat

Namco • £19.99 • Arcade flight

Another arcadey flyer. Average graphics and highly mundane, repetitive, yawnsome gameplay rules here despite its Namco origins. It's a bargain at a Platinum price of £19.99 though.

Score 5

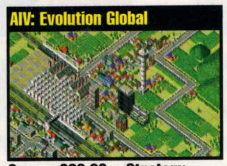
Air Race

TH•Q • £39.99 • Racer

It's a racing game – but in aeroplanes! Now, instead of just avoiding the walls you've got contact with the ground to contend with too. A neat and speedy though rather basic little game.

Score 6

AIV: Evolution Global



Sony • £39.99 • Strategy

There's a million and one parameters to fiddle with in order to produce a happy and thriving city, which can unfortunately lead to extreme confusion and bafflement. Try *SimCity 2000*.

Score 6

Allied General

Mindscape • £39.99 • Strategy

Yet more crusty strategy action for oldsters who want to relive the war without having to eat powdered egg and hiding under the stairs. It's dull to play and it looks awful. Get *C&C* instead.

Score 3

Alien Trilogy

Acclaim • £19.99 • Doom clone

The Aliens licence can't save it. This ain't no *Doom*. Pitiful redraw, slightly ropey-looking men-in-rubber-suit Aliens and a lack of variety plague this competent but irritating and repetitive clone.

Score 7

Alone in the Dark

Infogrames • £44.99 • RPG

Your 3D character explores static 2D backdrops fighting and finding things. In slow motion. *Resident Evil* ripped the formula off and makes a much better job of it too. Dated and crusty.

Score 6

Andretti Racing

EA • £39.99 • Racing

Certainly not up to *F1*'s high standards and bad redraw makes the tracks a little twistier than they ought to be. The neat split-screen two-player option works well and there's plenty of tracks.

Score 6

Area 51

GT • £44.99 • Lightgun

A version of the alright-for-five-minutes coin-op. Adequate but comparatively shabby-looking thanks to the painfully blocky baddies. And don't forget that you need a £30 lightgun to play it properly.

Score 3

Assault Rigs

Sony • £44.99 • 3D combat

Kind of a *Doom* in tanks, *Assault Rigs* sees you driving your futuristic vehicle through complex levels. A hyperactive camera and fudgy controls spoil the original but uninvolving experience.

Score 6

Atari Classics

GT • £44.99 • Arcade sim

Yet more retro nonsense, this time from ancient Atari. *Battlezone*, *Asteroids* and the rest are indeed arcade perfect but aren't any fun. The surprise inclusion of *Tempest* here makes *Tempest X3* a poor buy.

Score 4

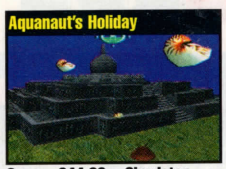
Auto Destruct

EA • £44.99 • Racer

You have a fast car. Good! It has weapons on it. Even better! But this thrilling premise turns out to be a rip off of Die Hard Trilogy's third episode and a rather sloppy game. Looks good. Plays bad.

Score 5

Aquanaut's Holiday



Sony • £44.99 • Simulator

Gad about the 3D sea bed coaxing fish to come and live around your reef with a range of 'pings'. With absorbing yet uneventful gameplay it's certainly an acquired taste. If you get hooked you'll love it.

Score 7

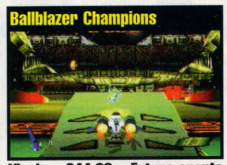
Ayrton Senna Kart Duel

Domark • £44.99 • Racing

A dubious licence for a surprisingly fun game. Whizz your funny little cart through some rather dull though violently winding 3D tracks. Realistic handling/braking help this along. Simple but good.

Score 7

Ballblazer Champions



Virgin • £44.99 • Future sports

One of those futuristic variations on football/hockey that, rather than being something new isn't as good as the real thing. Sluggish controls and an overall feeling of pointlessness seal its fate.

Score 6

Battle Arena Toshinden

Sony • £19.99 • 3D beat-'em-up

Early PlayStation fighter with a Japanese flavour. The ease of release of the special moves makes it a little too simple, however you can't go far wrong with a Platinum price of £19.99. *Tekken*'s best though.

Score 6

Battle Arena Toshinden 2

Sony • £44.99 • 3D beat-'em-up

A tiny improvement. The graphics are generally up-rated and the new characters, with their new weapons and moves are cool but for all its improvements this is still not up to *Tekken 2*'s high standards.

Score 7

Battle Arena Toshinden 3

Sony • £44.99 • 3D beat-'em-up

Yet more *Toshy* fighting fun. The third in the series and still not a patch on either of the *Tekkens*. Rather than tame the mad, over the top action of the previous games they've made it more so.

Score 6

Battle Stations

EA • £44.99 • Strategy/action

Not the old grid-based pen 'n' paper favourite but a daft all-flash-and-no-substance game where you drive ships about and wave crosshairs at your opponent. Not as stimulating as it sounds. If that.

Score 3

Black Dawn

Virgin • £44.99 • 3D shooter

The follow-up to *Agile Warrior* ditches planes in favour of a helicopter and features loads of mission, loads of big guns and ample smoothness. Solid blasting mayhem with a touch of realism.

Score 7

BLAM! Machinehead

Core • £39.99 • 3D blaster

Very colourful and fast-paced 3D blaster with smooth graphics, cool missions, big guns and lots and lots of things to kill though dull early missions hide the more interesting and puzzley later ones.

Score 7

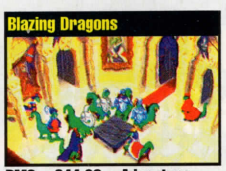
Blast Chamber

Activision • £44.99 • Puzzler

A odd mix of puzzles and action. You control a tiny weeny man with a bomb strapped to him. Cue lots of tiny, stick-men having fights plus plenty of occasional baffle-ment and frequent frustration.

Score 6

Blazing Dragons

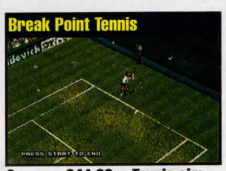


BMG • £44.99 • Adventure

The PlayStation's second point-'n'-clicker stars some rather obscure puzzles, a shed load of dull dialogue and appaling humour that will have you crying into your crisps through shock and disbelief.

Score 6

Break Point Tennis



Ocean • £44.99 • Tennis sim

Anyone for tennis. Yes it's all perfectly fine – a 3D polygonal playered tennis sim that errs on the real rather than the silly – but it's just not much fun. Buy *Smash Court Tennis* instead.

Score 7

Broken Sword

Sony • £44.99 • Adventure

An over-rated point 'n' clicker. Yes it's the best 'adventure' on the PlayStation, but it's often tedious and boring. It is nevertheless a lasting gameplay proposition, just don't expect a thrill-a-minute.

Score 7

Broken Sword 2

Sony • £34.99 • Adventure

A point and click adventure that does its job perfectly well. If you like adventures of this nature, smart. If slow, methodical, puzzley, heavily plot-based turgid guff does your head in, avoid it.

Score 7

Bubble Bobble Rainbow Islands

Interplay • £44.99 • Puzzle

More retro happenings. This is two old arcade games that deservedly went the way of the flared trouser a long time ago. Nostalgic yes, but ultimately unexciting, repetitive and grossly outdated.

Score 4

Bubble Bobble 2

Acclaim • £29.99 • Puzzler

More *Bubble Bobble* basically. A slightly jiggled set of game options and some new levels, but the same old simple and grossly addictive game lurks beneath. Fantastic fun for the mid-'80s minded.

Score 7

Burning Road

Eidos • £44.99 • Racing

Not the *Daytona* it would like to be. The cars slide out at every corner to make things 'interesting' and what's with that perspective? Cars in front look like they're about six inches high! Sheesh.

Score 6

Bust-A-Move 2

Acclaim • £29.99 • Puzzle

One of the finest puzzlers ever created. Behind its 16-bit cutesy Japanese looks lies a grossly addictive, high-speed puzzle blast to rival even *Tetris*. It only comes alive in two-player mode though.

Score 9

Carnage Heart

Sony • £34.99 • Strategy

Not the mech-battling action game you thought it was but a highly complex and potentially rivetting strategy game. Design and build robots and send them out to do your dirty work. Taxing but fun.

Score 8

Casper

Interplay • £34.99 • Adventure

Guide cute legless Casper around a spooky house doing dull things over and over again. Even the sub-teenagers this is aimed at will be lusting for a bit of action after ten minutes of this tedium.

Score 4

Castlevania

Konami • £44.99 • Adventure

A brilliant adventure game in the classic 16-bit Castlevania tradition. And that's where its problems lie. For all it's hugeness and RPG-like complexity it still looks like an old SNES game which is a shame.

Score 8

Cheesy

Ocean • £39.99 • Platformer

Sub-standard mock 3D platformer that wouldn't have passed for playable even in 16-bit days. Sure there's some snazzy 3D bits but don't let them fool you. This plays and looks like a dog.

Score 3

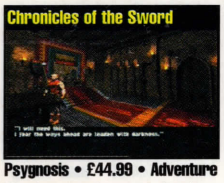
Chessmaster 3D

Mindscape • £34.99 • Chess

It's chess. It's the only chess game on the PlayStation. The modes, skill levels and options are plentiful but slightly dodgy presentation lets the side down. It plays a mean game of chess though. Admirable.

Score 7

Chronicles of the Sword



Psygnosis • £44.99 • Adventure

Wander around a pre-rendered medieval world having 'conversations' with badly rendered royals. It might look sexy and shivelrous but really it's a drab and dull adventure by numbers.

Score 4

Clock Tower

ASCII • £39.99 • 3D Adventure

Take *Resident Evil* and re-hash into a less able and even more mad Japanese form. Escape the mad Scissorman while investigating murders in a simplistic and non-scary tale of murder and intrigue.

Score 5

City of the Lost Children

Psygnosis • £44.99 • Adventure

For all its good looks and cool movie tie-in this is nothing more than a rehash of old *Alone in the Dark*. It's plot packed but fiddly slow controls mean that this plods when it should excite.

Score 7

Colony Wars

Psygnosis • £44.99 • Blaster

Fantastic looking but ultimately samey space combat game. Fly through space identifying and destroying gorgeous craft with fantastically powerful weapons. in a host of uninvolving missions.

Score 8

Command & Conquer

Virgin • £44.99 • Strategy

Ex-monster PC hit, soldier-shuffling action/strategy shenanigans which looks a little drab on the PlayStation. Don't under estimate the gameplay though, this is one of the most engrossing games ever.

Score 8

Command & Conquer: Red Alert

Virgin • £44.99 • Strategy

The conversion of the PC's hit *C&C* sequel improves the original's murky graphic, ups the difficulty and complexity and now features mouse compatibility and a superb link-up game. The best there is.

Score 9

Contra: Legacy of War

Konami • £44.99 • Shooter

Fast and frenzied action, umpteen power-ups and weapons, hails of bullets swarming in from every direction and fast-moving monsters that will catch you out a little more often than you'd prefer.

Score 6

Cool Boarders

Sony • £44.99 • Racing

A racing game in which you don't actually race against anyone. It's all rather strange and frustrating but the option to learn and perform tricks mid-race peps things up enormously. Not bad.

Score 6

Courier Crisis

BMG • £39.99 • Racing/Action

Ride a bicycle around pulling off stunts and hitting pedestrians, all so that you can deliver that important package within the time limit. Different, certainly. But entertaining only occasionally.

Score 5

Crash Bandicoot

Sony • £44.99 • 3D Platformer

Fantastic 3D platforming. Okay, so it's not very 3D but it's far more than most (ie *Pandemonium*). It's big, it's colourful and it never ceases to amaze. Not a Mario beater but great fun nonetheless.

Score 7

Crash Bandicoot 2

Sony • £44.99 • 3D Platformer

The PlayStation's best platformer – for now. Better looking than the first game, bigger, and packed with clever and bizarre gameplay ideas that keep you glued to the action. Mario beater? No. Again. Shame.

Score 8

Criticom

Virgin • £44.99 • Beat-'em-up

If you're yet to get your hands on a fighter, buy *Tekken 2* NOW! *Criticom* is okay – nice fighters, interesting weapons, but this derivative clone just isn't up to the big *T*'s sky-high standards.

Score 6

Croc: The Legend of Gobbos

EA • £44.99 • 3D Platformer

The first of the 3D platformers and a real disappointment. Yes, it's 3D but not as much as you'd like meaning there's no exploration to do and no real sense of freedom or adventure. Dull and calculating.

Score 6

Crusader: No Remorse

EA • £44.99 • Shoot-'em-up

Startlingly similar to *Project Overkill*, this too uses an isometric view to depict its ultra-violent, futuristic shooty action. Again, it's all rather repetitive and simple for any lasting appeal.

Score 6

PlayStation Power Top Fives

Interested in a particular sort of game? Well here's your at-a-glance guide to the *PlayStation Power* team's top five games on sale this month. Also there's our favourite imports and 'what we've been playing' charts to pore over. For more info on a game read about it in the mag or check out its mini review here in Listings. *PlayStation Power* – we're here to make sure that you're always on the ball!

Racing Games

1 TOCA Touring Car 8
2 Total Drivin' 9
3 Formula 1 '97 9
4 Moto Racer 8
5 Rapid Racer 7

Footy Games

1 FIFA: Road to World Cup 98 ...9
2 Actua Soccer 2 9
3 ISS Pro 9
4 adidas Power Soccer 2 6
5 Kick Off '97 6

Beat-'Em-Ups

1 Bushido Blade 8
2 Tekken 2 10
3 SF EX Plus Alpha 9
4 Soul Blade 9
5 Marvel Super Heroes 8

3D Games

1 Duke Nukem 8
2 Tomb Raider 2 9
3 G-Police 9
4 Shadow Master 8
5 Resident Evil Director's Cut 9

Other Sports Games

1 NBA Live 98 7
2 International Track & Field 7
3 Smash Court Tennis 9
4 Ten Pin Alley 6
5 Actua Golf 2 9

Others

1 Final Fantasy VII 10
2 Grand Theft Auto 8
3 Super Puzzle Fighter II Turbo ...9
4 Bust-A-Move 2 9
5 Time Crisis 7

Import Games

1 Masters of Teras Kasi 8
2 Bloody Roar 8
3 Gran Turismo (Demo) 9
4 Depth 8
5 Bushido Blade 8

Our faves this month

1 Bushido Blade 8
2 Masters of Teras Kasi 8
3 Final Fantasy VII 10
4 FIFA: Road to World Cup 8
5 TOCA Touring Car 8

Crypt Killer

Konami• £44.99 • Lightgun

Using Konami's lightgun this brings a blocky poor conversion of a lame arcade game to your PlayStation. Shoot stuff then, in a dramatic change of pace, shoot some more stuff. Not good.

Score 3

D

Acclaim • £36.99 • Adventure

Lovely looking but uninvolving adventure. Button presses unleash a torrent of beautiful rendered graphics as your character minces around a spooky house. Gorgeous to look at – boring to play.

Score 5

Dark Stalkers

Virgin • £39.99 • Beat-'em-up

An okay fighter but a slightly disappointing conversion (many frames of animation have been cruelly hacked out). Gameplay wise *Dark Stalkers* is rather a little too OTT for our subtle tastes too.

Score 6

Descent

Interplay • £39.99 • 3D blaster

It's *Doom* in three dimensions. Fly your ship through tortuously twisting corridors, blasting like Billy-oh. The confusing 3D levels will make your head throb but that's all part of the game. Great.

Score 8

Discworld II

Psygnosis • £34.99 • Golf sim

Hey gimps! The sequel to the worst adventure game ever gets logical puzzles and a plot to speak of but retains the toe-curlingly unfunny Pratchett inspired dialogue and snail's pace progress. Not good.

Score 4

Epidemic

Sony • £34.99 • Doom clone

The follow-up to *Kileak the Blood* (one of the worst games ever) and while better is still a little too dull and plodding for all but the most resilient. There's just not enough to do or shoot here. Sorry.

Score 6

Cyberia

Interplay • £39.99 • Adventure

A decrepit PC game in which a pre-rendered bloke wanders around pre-rendered corridors having an 'adventure' while happening across dull pre-rendered shoot-'em-up sub-games.

Score 3

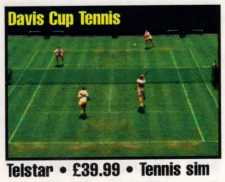
Dark Forces

Virgin • £49.99 • Doom-clone

Don't let Star Wars fever make you buy what amounts to *Doom*-with-Stormtroopers. It's okay, a slightly jerky version of a disappointing PC game, but it's outclassed by *Doom*, *Disruptor*, *Tenka*.and *Exhumed*.

Score 6

Davis Cup Tennis



Telstar • £39.99 • Tennis sim

Skinny stick-players from yesteryear scuttle around in a game that neither looks nor plays like 'real life' for all its simulation/licenced event intentions. Best stick with *Smash Court* or *Sampras Extreme*.

Score 4

Descent 2

Interplay • £44.99 • 3D Blaster

What went wrong? The supposed improvement to *Descent* (adding all sorts of new features) looks messy and chugs along in disturbing jerk-o-vision. Time for a new 3D engine methinks.

Score 6

Disruptor

Interplay • £39.99 • Doom clone

A *Doom* clone that comes surprisingly close to emulating the thrills and action of the 3D-master. The graphics are (shock, horror) better, with very little pixelation and stunning detail throughout.

Score 8

ESPN Extreme Games

Sony CE • £33.99 • Racing

Sub-*Road Rash*, Pepsi Max generation tosh which wastes some passable 3D scenery and scrolling on racing 'extreme' nonsense like snowboards and mountain bikes. Piffle.

Score 4

Cyber Sled

Namco • £37.99 • Arcade

No! Put this back on the shelf this instant! This is Namco's lowest moment. A lacklustre conversion of a mediocre 3D tank game. Shoot your opponent then hide behind things. Over and over again.

Score 3

Darklight Conflict

EA • £39.99 • £44.99

Space combat in the Elite mould with plenty of lighting effects and fab graphics. There are loads of missions too but this all adds up to a neat 3D shoot-'em-up rather than the Star Trekkin' you want.

Score 7

Defcon 5

Sony • £36.99 • Adventure

Doom-style shooting merged with an adventure game. What this comes down to is roaming an almost deserted space station flicking switches and shooting badly-drawn green robots. Poor.

Score 4

Destruction Derby

Psygnosis • £19.99 • Racer

Race on tiny, boring tracks, having lots of collisions while trying to rub-out the other cars – a nice idea that doesn't quite work. Not enough of a driving game and yet there's not enough action either.

Score 6

Doom

GTI • £44.99 • It's Doom!

The master. Lose yourself in a HER-UGE 3D world and kill lots of evil things. All the levels of the two PC games are here along with all the blood and gore. The original and best 3D blaster. Buy it.

Score 9

Excalibur 2555AD

Telstar • £44.99 • Adventure

A bedroom programmer's attempt at ripping off *Tomb Raider* with some clumsy RPG elements whacked on top. It looks okay but the flat samey levels are not big, not clever and not good.

Score 5

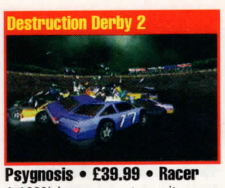
RIGHT ROYAL RIP-OFF!

Every month we scour shops and advertisements to uncover under hand shop-based trickery and non-bargains of the rip-off kind.

I awaken again in a cold sweat, my face fixed in a tortured grimace. I know I should be happy, contented, but I am not. I know that my £130 PlayStation should have been enough. I know that the dozens of software titles in my collection should satisfy me but they don't. And my recently acquired light gun should surely have sated any remaining desires for videogame paraphernalia, but it didn't. There is still something missing from my life and it's ruining my every waking hour and invading my sleep. But I'm flicking through the pages of *PlayStation Power*, casually, just hoping to spot a story or review that I missed when I first bought the mag. And as I do so, I stop at a page of small adverts. And there, in the bottom right hand corner, there it is. The thing that I've been craving without knowing it. Its beautiful silver tubes glisten and sweep majestically up to the exquisite contours of the moulded chair. It sits there waiting for some lucky gamer to explore the full joy of racing games within the confines of its sexy frame. It is the Video Interactor from G & C Engineering. Cor!...

... Oh but hang on, it's bloody £99, and if I'm not mistaken it only accommodates the Mad Catz/Gamester steering wheel. What a rip off!

Destruction Derby 2



Psygnosis • £39.99 • Racer

A 100% improvement over its predecessor, *DD2* puts right practically all of *DD*'s faults. The vast and varied tracks lift the game into almost *Ridge Revolution* territory for delivering lasting, high-speed, thrills.

Score 9

Duke Nukem

GTI • £44.99 • Doom clone

Not a great looker, by the standard of more recent offerings, but this PC to PlayStation Doom-clone conversion delivers some fantastically solid gamplay shot through with a strong sense of humour.

Score 8

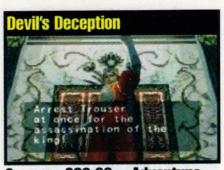
Exhumed

BMG • £44.99 • 3D Blaster

What starts as an adequate *Doom* copy soon develops into a fine, totally playable and exquisitely designed game of its own. Great action, puzzles and some lovely levels, effects and monsters.

Score 8

Devil's Deception



Ocean • £39.99 • Adventure

In Japan a couple of years ago this might have been the cat's antlers but in the UK in 1997 it's a weird and clunky 3D adventure game with a *Doom*-style view and action in the *King's Field* vein. ie. very poor.

Score 5

Dynasty Wars

Ocean • £44.99 • Beat-'em-up

Gorgeous looking and riddled with interesting characters each with swishy *Soul Blade*-style weapons. It remains, however, inferior to '*Blade* and the *Tekkens* for all its efforts. Great but not great enough.

Score 7

Explosive Racing

JMI • £39.99 • Racing

The follow-up to *Burning Road* has more tracks (of the mad variety) has more vehicles (including bikes and trucks) but still retains the dodgy 3D perspective and curious sticky walls. Not a good thing.

Score 6

Die Hard Trilogy

EA • £44.99 • Blaster/driving

It's three £40 games in one. An over-the-shoulder shooter, a *Virtua Cop*-style cross-hair waving exercise and a car-chasing driving game. Each section has fabulous graphics and rivetting gameplay.

Score 9

Earthworm Jim 2

Virgin • £39.99 • Platformer

It could have been so good! This PlayStation conversion is exactly the same as the fine but rather ancient MegaDrive version. Which, we're sure you'll agree, is an absolute crime. Off!

Score 4

Fade To Black

EA • £39.99 • 3D adventure

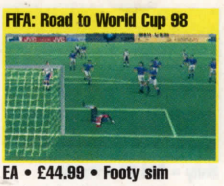
An involving plot and a neat mix of action and puzzles. It's not super-huge though and its flat-shaded slightly dreary graphics have been recently kicked into touch by *Tomb Raider* but it's still top.

Score 8

Acclaim • £44.99 • Fighter

A simple side-on scrolling beat-'em-up given a 3D brush up. Despite being a creation of DHT's Probe this is boring to play, only marginally nice to look at and steeped in 16-bit crumbliness.

Score 4



EA • £44.99 • Footy sim

EA have finally managed to sort out their awful FIFA series. Not only is this better than the previous games, it's one of the best footy titles available. Brilliantly playable (but a bit jerky).

Score 8

GTI • £44.99 • 3D Blaster

The sequel to the best-selling *Doom* has 30 new levels (not the 64 implied on the box) and a teeny weeny graphical brush-up. It's more of the same really and so is real *Doom* fanatics only.

Score 7

Konami • £34.99 • Footy sim

Konami's first footy game, coming pre *ISS Deluxe* and *Pro*. It's 3D but was easily surpassed by the likes of *Actua* and *FIFA 97*, and looks more than a little out of its depth these days. Nice not great.

Score 6

ASCII • £39.99 • Driving

A rough, knockabout affair in which you drive through towns and countryside causing mayhem. Great fun in the short term but lacking the tracks, options and opportunity for mastery that we demand.

Score 6

Core • £19.99 • Chopper sim

With plenty of missions with varied objectives to accomplish and hundreds of different targets to blow the crud out of in your tooled-up to the hilt super-duper attack chopper. Nice one.

Score 8

Psygnosis • £44.99 • Racing

Fantastic F1 sim. All the courses are ready to be raced on with all of '95's teams and drivers. A graphical tour de force that is a must for F1 followers and lovers of driving games alike. Great stuff.

Score 8

Virgin • £44.99 • Puzzle/action

Play futuristic, isometrically viewed, tag in mazes. Once again a two-player option provides the laughs with the stoney faced single mode delivering only minor slightly scrappy looking thrills.

Score 6

Core • £44.99 • Fighting

A terribly disappointing update of the old scrolling beat-'em-up. Think *Final Fight* but in 3D. This may be from the makers of Tomb Raider but a lack of variety and boring game-play make it fun for five minutes.

Score 7

BMG • £44.99 • Adventure

A cruel hotchpotch of isometric shooting game and adventure. Travel the city map entering door-ways to determine which shooty level and which childish story-telling cut-scene you'll see next.

Score 4

Psygnosis • £44.99 • Racing

Yes! Not only a teams and tracks update but the brand new hi-res graphics mode and improved commentary and sim options make this a whole new game. And a brilliant one at that. Superb.

Score 9

MicroProse • £34.99 • Heli sim

Dodgy, clumsy, out-of-date helicopter sim blessed with half-finished graphics that tries for real-ism then abandons the entire half-baked project in favour of looking and playing terribly instead.

Score 4

Sony • £44.99 • RPG

The biggest and best RPG ever. So good in fact even those unfamiliar with pointy-hatted pursuits could well be drawn into it's lavish nest of superb graphics and involving story-line. We bloody love it basically.

Score 10

T•HQ • £34.99 • 3D platformer

Yes, everything moves very smoothly. BUT, those flat-shaded polygons look rubbish and that viewpoint is a basically wrong, causing you to tumble to your doom far too often. Take it away!

Score 3

Telstar • £39.99 • Racing sim

Yet another racing game but WITH A DIFFERENCE! It's fast, it's furious, it's not particularly serious – it's kart racing. Speedy and pleasing enough but not as deep or rewarding as its full-size rivals.

Score 7

EA • £44.99 • 3D Shoot-'em-up

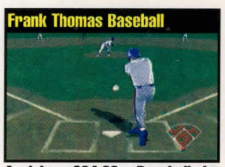
A 3D shooter, nothing more. Fly a large wardrobe slowly and inexorably through gloomy and uneventful 3D scenery shooting stuff. It's all been done way better by the likes of *Ray Storm*.

Score 5

EA • £19.99 • Footy sim

Slow, treacly gameplay and dodgy sprite graphics are just two of the many nails in *FIFA 96*'s coffin. It's '97 vintage is a great improvement (but is still dodgy) so unless you see this *very* cheaply, give it a miss.

Score 5



Acclaim • £34.99 • Baseball sim

A perfectly adequate version of everyone's favourite sport, er, baseball. The sprite players aren't as sleek as they could be and (like real baseball) it can get rather dull. Still, if you're a fan…

Score 5

Psygnosis • £44.99 • Blaster

What happens when you combine superlative presentation, the best action strategy game since *C&C* and the PlayStation's finest 3D shoot-'em-up. Exciting gameplay meets stupendous graphics. Ace.

Score 9

Sunsoft • £44.99 • Puzzle

Basically a conversion of a once great SNES game but these days we've got the likes of *Bust-A-Move 2* and *Super Puzzle Fighter*. Both of which kick old Hebereke and his mates squarely into touch. Sorry.

Score 6

GTI • £44.99 • *Doom* clone

The genuine sequel to *Doom* adds RPG elements to create a huge and taxing game. Thing is it's slow, and it looks scrappy, disappointing dedicated *Doom*-sters. Extended play will reveal its depth.

Score 6

JVC • £44.99 • Tennis sim

Another 'serious' take on tennis, rather like *Sampras Extreme* but not as good. However, neither are as good as Namco's cartoony *Smash Court Tennis*. So, squarely beaten on every count then.

Score 5

EA • £44.99 • Footy sim

The players look lovely but they just don't move their arses or the ball around fast enough. Counter-intuitive controls mean that you never feel quite in control and tardy player highlighting tops it off.

Score 6

Hasbro • £34.99 • Arcade

Who's idea was this? A 3D update of one of the most ancient and dull arcade games ever. Jump the frog across to safety, avoiding the car/truck based obstacles. This is the same but in 3D. Fair cop.

Score 5

BMG • £34.99 • Platformer

The wise-cracking Gekko leaps through lots of dated-looking platform based levels making the worst 'jokes' in the world on the way. It's enough to make you stuff gorgonzola in your ears.

Score 5

Sony • £34.99 • Platformer

A cartoony platformer in the same vein as the old *Aladdin* and *Jungle Book* SNES games. A few more frames of animation and more of those clever 3D into-the-screen bits would have been welcome.

Score 6

Gremlin • £34.99 • Racing

Competent enough racer that for some reason fails to generate any real excitement. The mad terrain/big truck racing theme is interesting but the bumps and hills will annoy rather than delight.

Score 7

JVC • £34.99 • Racing/shooter

Now, what would happen if you put guns on Ridge cars? Well, the result certainly wouldn't be *Impact Racing*. The racing bit is fast but dull and the shooting bit is rather daft. One of the worst racers around.

Score 3

Kicking Corner

These are the games that are so BAD they're not worthy of a Listings review. If you see any of these streaky-faced so-called games clogging up shelving RUN AWAY!

2Xtreme: Rubbish blocky/spritey racing
All Star Soccer: The worst football game ever
Batman Forever Arcade: Remember those
Bedlam: Syndicate Wars but much, much worse
Bubsy 3D: Guffy 3D platformer. Sucks big time
CyberSpeed: Sick and painful Wipeout clone
Discworld: Idiotically complex and irritating
Dragonheart: Fire and Steel: Dated platforming
Extreme Pinball: Like a bloody Amiga game
Galaxian3: Pre-rendered sub-standard shooter
Hi-Octane: Terrible Wipeout-style racing
In the Hunt: A 16-bit-style side-scrolling blaster
Incredible Hulk: Ugly, jerky platform/action
Iron Man XO Manowar: Worse than death
Johnny Bazookatone: Flash but trash
Kileak the Blood: Wickedly inadequate Doom
Killing Zone: The worst fighter EVER
Namco Museum Volume 4: Worst museum yet
Nascar Racing: Jerky, dire bollocks
Off-World Interceptor Extreme: Racing dung
Olympic Games: Ugly and pointless
Penny Racers: The worst racer you can buy
Philosoma: Dated and drab shoot-'em-up
Primal Rage: No please! Laughably inept
Revolution X: Aerosmith!? What? Bleurgh!
Shellshock: Shoddy 3D tank combat
Spot Goes to Hollywood: 16-bit
Starblade Alpha: Stupid and boring shooter
Starwinder: Yet more sub-Wipeout racing tosh
Steel Harbinger: Like Loaded. Only far worse
Street Fighter: The Movie: Crappy fighting game
The Crow: City of Angels: Scabby scrolling fighter

Price Hunter

New Year Sales Madness!

At Dixons they're lopping up to £20 off certain games in their sale. *Oddworld Abe's Oddysee* is now just £19.99 with *Alien Trilogy* clocking in at an equally bargainous £14.99. And how about *Bust-A-Move 2* down £5 to just £14.99, *Cool Boarders* with a fiver off making it £34.99, *Pandemonium 2* down £15 to £29.99, *Fighting Force* down to £34.99 and *Formula Karts* now just £29.99. Nice.

Dixons also do Pick and Mix games, where a selection of these games may be added to the purchase of a new PlayStation for some bargainous prices. The new line up is *Oddworld Abe's Oddysee*, *Psychic Force*, *Onside*, *Courier Crisis*, *Bust-A-Move 2*, *V-Rally*, *Alien Trilogy*, *Reloaded*, *Casper*, *Rayman*, *Bubsy 3D* and *Descent 2*. In addition to this there are now Pick and Mix game packs where you choose from either *Oddworld* or *V-Rally* then add one Pick and Mix game for just £49.95, add three Pick and Mix games for £84.95 or add five Pick and Mix games for £119.90.

Also, keep an eye out for a real PlayStation bargain. Some branches of Our Price have been selling originally packaged PlayStations (not the two pad plus memory card value pack) for just £99.99. Best get in there quick.

Don't forget Electronics Boutique's Value and Choice line up, where buying a PlayStation allows you to buy top games for knock down prices. For just £9.99 try *Tunnel B1* or *Descent 2*, for £14.99 try *Super Puzzle Fighter* or *Mechwarrior 2*, for £19.99 try *Destruction Derby 2*, *Porsche Challenge* or *Ridge Racer Revolution*, for £24.99 go for *PaRappa The Rapper*, *Fantastic Four* or *Kurushi* and finally, for just £44.99 you can get *Time Crisis* plus the G-Con 45 light gun.

Sony have launched their own coloured pads. There's only black and white at the present but the swish packaging and £17.99 price tag make them right tasty.

Finally, HMV had a clearance sale in January. They might have some games left so be quick if you want to get yourself the likes of *Doom* for just £22.99!

Independence Day

EA • £44.99 • 3D Shoot-'em-up

Basically a reworking of the old *Afterburner* into-the-screen 3D blaster, only this time with whizzy polygon graphics. It's an okayish if simple affair, ruined by awful close-range pop-up throughout.

Score 5

ISS Pro

Konami • £44.99 • Footy

The best football game EVER. Superb looks, responsive controls and a firm but fair ref make this a winner. The commentary is unintentionally hilarious though. "Have a second goal!" indeed.

Score 9

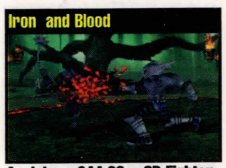
Jonah Lomu Rugby

Codemasters • £39.99 • Rugby

The only rugby game there is. It's okay but it's *rugby*, with all it's stops and starts and confusing plays. Let's face it, other sports make better games. But if it's rugby you want then this is it.

Score 6

Iron and Blood



Acclaim • £44.99 • 3D Fighter

Why even look at this when you can have *Tekken 2*? The Advanced Dungeons and Dragons license (it features character from the famous RPGs) may pull in a few anoraks but this is basically terrible.

Score 4

Jersey Devil

Ocean • £44.99 • Platfromer

Nice cartoony visuals and a tough challenge. Plus the freedom of movement is a real bonus. But the gameplay is very straightforward and the game world is rather sparsely populated.

Score 7

Judge Dredd

Gremlin • £39.99 • Shooter

A 3D shooter based on Dredd and compatible with all light guns. Sounds great. It's a lot of fun, but it's not as good as *Time Crisis* and doesn't have that brilliant duck 'n' shoot control system.

Score 6

ISS Deluxe

Konami • £44.99 • Football

Fantastic footy fun with horribly dated 16-bit-esque looks. The classic example of gameplay over graphics, it remains more or less unchanged from the 16-bit original but is still great fun.

Score 8

Jet Rider

Sony • £44.99 • Racing

The usual racing fare are replaced with exciting futuristic jet bikes that can race over water and land. However, this adds nothing to what is essentially a rather lacklustre and uneventful game.

Score 7

Jumping Flash

Sony • £34.99 • 3D platformer

As a robotic rabbit you must leap around a 3D world doing the usual platform thing. Once you get your head around it, it's great. The graphics are a little chunky though and it's not huge either.

Score 6

Jumping Flash 2

Sony • £34.99 • 3D platformer

Far preferable to its well-received fore runner. There's lots of nicer textures and better designed more exploitative levels to be found here but the whole game is still too darned easy to finish. Damn.

Score 8

Jupiter Strike

Sony • £34.99 • Shoot-'em-up

Flash for five minutes then a thinly veiled attempt to hide old skool shooting in the very latest PlayStation nightclubbing attire. We know who you are and where you live. Off!

Score 3

K1 Arena Fighters

T•HQ • £39.99 • Beat-'em-up

Not at all happening in the slightest. A very poor fighter with an 'official' kickboxing licence. There really is nothing here to commend. Terrible controls, boring gameplay and frankly silly looking characters.

Score 4

Kick Off 97

Maxis • £34.99 • Golf sim

Another football game and another competent but uneventful gameplay experience. With *ISS Pro* being the current footy ruler, second place efforts like this one are totally unnecessary. Sorry.

Score 5

King's Field

Sony • £34.99 • 3D Adventure

Pathetic early PlayStation *Doom*-persepected RPG that has only just appeared in the UK. Slow and tedious on import, just as awful AND two years out of date in the UK. A wide berth is required

Score 3

Konami Open Golf

Konami • £44.99 •Golf sim

A simple and arcadey game of golf with some snappy whizzing power metres and flying camera views. However with only ONE course and limited play options *Actua Golf 2* has it soundly beaten.

Score 7

Kurushi

Sony • £34.99 • Puzzler

Adult and atmospheric puzzle game involving the removal of huge cubes before they crush you. It's a little bit *Tetris* and a lot like a totally new concept in puzzle games. Absorbing single player fun.

Score 8

Krazy Ivan

Psygnosis • £36.99 • 3D blaster

Be a big robot and shoot lots of small robots in lots of featureless, dull levels. A dearth of variety and questionable longevity serve to more readily ease *Krazy Ivan* further into the bargain bin.

Score 5

Legacy of Kain

BMG • £44.99 • Adventure RPG

Play the part of a vampire as he strides through the land hacking, slashing and sucking virgin's necks. It's a huge game but the sprite graphics make it look like an ancient 16-bit RPG.

Score 7

Little Big Adventure

EA • £44.99 • Adventure

Another ex-PC adventure with some marvellous graphics and well designed plot and execution. A lasting and varied arcade adventure which taxes the brain and, in places, the fingers. Cool.

Score 8

Loaded

Gremlin • £19.99 • Blaster

Waddle around maze-like levels dealing death to anything that moves. It's good fun but eventually the lack of variety and simplistic nature of the levels will wipe the stupid smile off your face.

Score 5

Lomax

Psygnosis • £39.99 • Platform

The Lemmings are back! More use of some Lemming-like building, and digging would have lifted this above the 2D platforms-from-yesteryear it so obviously is. It's a bit of a missed opportunity really.

Score 5

Lost Vikings 2

Interplay • £39.99 • Platformer

A slightly dusty-looking, but fine platform romp in which you guide three rendered vikings, each of which has unique skills, through umpteen 2D platform levels. A perfect mix of puzzles and action.

Score 8

Lone Soldier

Telstar • £39.99 • 3D shooter

Despite being plagued with slow-down, a strange view and odd controls this 3D shooter is great fun. Simply walk into the screen and shoot stuff. God knows why we like it, but we do.

Score 7

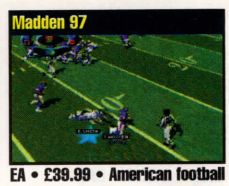
Machine Hunter

Eidos • £39.99 • Blaster

This is the game that *Reloaded* should have been. Fast, colourful and frantic, then topped off with a neat smattering of 3D top-down trickery. A little old-skool perhaps but top blasting action all the same.

Score 7

Madden 97



EA • £39.99 • American football

It's the latest *Madden* and it's the best American football game you can buy. Slightly chunky graphics are more than made up for by the faultless player AI and fab, atmosphere generating presentation.

Score 8

Magic Carpet

EA • £39.99 • 3D blaster

A rather less lovely version of the famous axminster-riding PC hit. Collect mana to make your castle bigger, adding a slightly interesting strategy element. That's only slightly, mind you.

Score 7

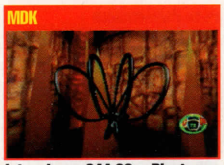
Marvel Super Heroes

Virgin • £44.99 • Beat-'em-up

What a superb combination. Loads of your favourite Marvel Superheroes and villains appearing in a fantastic combat game created by the masters of the 2D beat-'em-up, Capcom. Fantastic!

Score 8

MDK



Interplay • £44.99 • Blaster

Fast action 3D blasting with a highly original look and well designed hi-tech levels. It's *Doom*-style blasting with *Tomb Raider*-style 3D and a flawless conversion of a huge PC hit. Excellent.

Score 9

Micro Machines V3

Codemasters • £44.99 • Racer

This mad and mental racer pops the 2D cars into the third dimension. A smooth tracking camera flies overhead, keeping it's eye on the action across 30 incredible 3D tracks. Remarkable and excellent.

Score 9

Moto Racer

EA • £44.99 • Bike racing

Highly commendable. Race both dirt bikes and *Manx TT*-style road machines on a total of six varied dirt and road tracks. Only the short tracks and dull scenery let it down. It's ace with the analogue pad too.

Score 8

Namco Museum Vol 3

Namco • £39.99 • Arcade sim

Part three gives us *Galaxian* (top blaster), *Tower of Druaga* (boring maze game), *Phozon* (puzzler), *Dig Dug* (hopeless), *Pole Position 2* (the racer ever). It seems they're scraping the retro barrel already.

Score 4

Nascar 98

EA • £39.99 • Racing

EA's previous Nascar game, Andretti Racing was a dog. For this sequel the game engine is much improved, the handling of the cars is excellent and the computer opponents are dead clever. Good.

Score 7

NBA Jam Extreme

Acclaim • £44.99 • Basketball

Everyone's favourite mad 2D arcade basketball game goes 3D. The gameplay is basically unchanged, but as it isn't real 'proper' basketball it therefore may not be to the tastes of many.

Score 7

MechWarrior 2

Activision • £44.99 • 3D Blaster

Featureless landscapes and simplified spot-a-baddie-kill-him-with-a-barrage-of-missiles game-play let down a potentially exciting and simplified conversion of the hit futuristic PC 3D battle sim.

Score 7

Monopoly

Hasbro • £44.99 • Board game

There's a fundamental problem. Even though the game is well-implemented and it's been given a neat 32-bit overhaul, the fact is, *Monopoly*'s all about interacting with people and the pieces. Dull.

Score 4

Motor Toon GP

Sony • £44.99 • Racing

One of the first PlayStation games. It amazed us all with its 60fps speed and outlandishly colourful and mad racing antics. Time has been a little cruel to old *Motor Toon* and *MT2*, below, is better.

Score 6

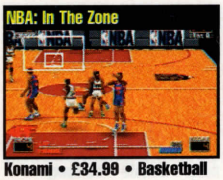
Namco Museum Vol 5

Namco • £34.99 • Arcade sim

Contiaining *Baraduke, Pac Mania, Dragon Spirit, Metro Racer* and *Ledgend of the Valkyrie*, this fifth in the museum series lacks even a hit game among its quota, making it totally crumby and redundant.

Score 3

NBA: In The Zone



Konami • £34.99 • Basketball

In The Zone has great looks and plenty of opportunity for flash dunks. but the gameplay, sadly, is massively flawed in the stealing and blocking departments making defensive duties almost impossible.

Score 5

NBA Jam TE

Acclaim • £29.99 • Basketball

Almost identical to the SNES version – but so what? Its mental arcade speed, outrageous commentary and impossible dunks make this 2D two-on-two hoop-fest addictive beyond reason.

Score 6

Mega Man 8

Ocean • £39.99 • Platformer

Yet more *Mega Man* antics, in this follow-up to *X3*, and yet again practically nothing is changed for the better. The graphics still look 16-bit and Meg still reacts very awkwardly to your pad pushes.

Score 4

Monster Trucks

Psygnosis • £44.99 • Racer

Plough off over hill and dale in your attempts to reach the check-point first. Unfortunately races are amazingly skill-free. Add to this some criminal pop-up and you've got uncharacteristically duff effort.

Score 7

Motor Toon GP 2

Sony • £44.99 • Racing

Not more of the same but a graphical re-tweak, adding more detail and the racing side of things has been tightened up too, making this less of a graphics showcase and more of a game.

Score 8

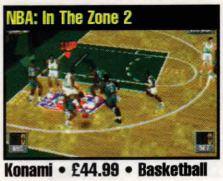
Nanotek Warrior

Virgin • £44.99 • Blaster

A flash looking, re-jiggled *Tempest* clone. Fly along space-age sausages or down winding tubes whizzing left and right and shooting garishly coloured… stuff. Neat, but too simple for extended play.

Score 4

NBA: In The Zone 2

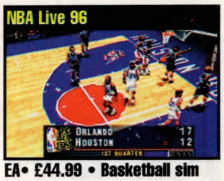


Konami • £44.99 • Basketball

Not bad! Criticisms duly taken on board, Konami have improved *'Zone* no end. However, despite looking the business and putting in a solid and thoroughly enjoyable game we still prefer the fine *Total NBA '96*.

Score 8

NBA Live 96

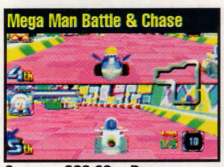


EA• £44.99 • Basketball sim

This disappointing 3D hooper uses sprite players which look decidedly dodgy and (erk) the game doesn't play too well either thanks to some murky controls. Outclassed by *Total NBA* on every front.

Score 5

Mega Man Battle & Chase



Ocean • £39.99 • Racer

Who needs *Mario Kart* when we've got *Mega Man Battle & Chase*! Er… except this is rather poor actually. Mad, colourful graphics confusing tracks and a complete lack of feel make this unbearable.

Score 3

Mortal Kombat 3

GTI • £38.99 • 2D Beat-'em-up

MK3 may be a perfect conversion of the arcade smash but unless you see this for a tenner, lurking underneath some old 'Look-In' annuals at a car boot sale you'll be better off with the newer *Trilogy*.

Score 6

Myst

Sony • £37.99 • Adventure

Basically a series of pre-rendered movies triggered by occasional button-presses. There's not enough to keep your mind and fingers busy here, unless you think and move very slowly indeed…

Score 3

Mega Man X3

Virgin • £39.99 • Platformer

Old SNES classic comes to PlayStation and gets pelted with rocks for being EXACTLY the same. Tiny flat sprites, lack of variety, dubious level design and collision detection. This simply won't do.

Score 3

Mortal Kombat Trilogy

GTI • £38.99 • 2D Beat-'em-up

Trilogy has all the characters, all the moves and all the backgrounds of all three MK games – IN ONE. This doesn't necessarily mean three times the fun though, but *MKT* will satisfy all your *MK* urges.

Score 8

Namco Museum Vol 1

Namco • £36.99 • Arcade sim

Retro nutter! Play *Galaga* (yes!), *Pacman* (yes!), *Pole Position* (yes!), *Toypop* (err…), *Bosconian* (um…) and *Rally-X* (eh?). Unfortunately these 'classics' simply aren't actually any good these days.

Score 5

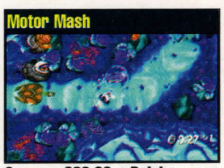
Mickey's Wild Adventure

Sony • £34.99 • Platformer

Essentially an old 16-bit title and there's a floaty imprecise feel to wor Mickey which caused us some consternation too. A few 3D into/out of the screen sections help but this ain't no *Crash*.

Score 5

Motor Mash



Ocean • £39.99 • Driving

Why bother when you can have *Micro Machines V3*. There's nothing here to tempt you away from the master. A neat enough multi-player game but done much better elsewhere. Sorry fellas.

Score 5

Namco Museum Vol 2

Namco • £39.99 • Arcade sim

This time around we've got *Gaplus* (top), *Xevious* (top), *Mappy* (odd), *Grobda* (mad), *Dragon Buster* (ancient) and *Ms Pac Man* (pointless) to play. Again, they're all a bit mup. Oh dear.

Score 5

"Worth a Look"

For your gaming and buying advice, or merely for your titillation, we highlight a PlayStation offer that's worthy of note.

You got a PlayStation for Christmas. You bought one or two titles that you were gagging to play and you picked up a bargain in the January sales. But that's all over now and all the games have reverted to their full price. Skint?

Well, you have two options. You could sit around twiddling your thumbs until you've saved enough money for another game, or, buy a Platinum game, Sony's range of cut-price classics. Now's the perfect time. For just £20 you can pick up one of the following. They've got to be worth a look, surely. Here's that Platinum list in full. Check out their reviews elsewhere. Cheers.

- Actua Soccer
- Air Combat
- Alien Trilogy
- Battle Arena Toshinden
- Bust A Move 2
- Destruction Derby
- Fade To Black
- FIFA '96
- Need For Speed
- Loaded
- Thunderhawk 2
- International Track & Field
- PGA Tour '96
- Pro Pinball: The Web
- Rayman
- Ridge Racer
- Ridge Racer Revolution
- Road Rash
- Tekken
- Wipeout
- Worms

NBA Live 97

EA • £44.99 • Basketball sim

Greatly improved over '96's spritey, jerky effort. Larger polygonal players now jockey for the ball. Loads of options and a wodge of stodgy stats complete a solid package. Well done.

Score 7

Need for Speed 2

EA • £44.99 • Driving

There's new cars and new tracks and that's it. There's no handling improvements and the graphics are just as shabby around the edges as ever. It's just been totally stuffed by *Porsche Challenge*.

Score 6

NHL 98

EA • £44.99 • Ice hockey

The latest NHL is not only a superb hockey game but a superb game in its own right. Always a step ahead of its FIFA counterparts NHL is even smoother and better looking than last year's effort. Top stuff.

Score 8

Nightmare Creatures

Sony • £34.99 • 3D Adventure

What could have been a *Tomb Raider* beater turns out to be a very accomplished but rather limp fighting/exploring game. The fighting's simplistic and the explorings just not up to *Tomb Raider* standards.

Score 7

Overblood

EA • £39.99 • 3D Adventure

What may at first seem like a *Resident Evil* rip-off soon foregos *Resi*'s shock tactics in favour of a regular puzzle-based assault on the mind. Huge and involving but lacking in excitement and tension.

Score 8

Peak Performance

JVC • £39.99 • Racing

It might contain a rudimentary track editing feature, it might have loads and loads of cars to choose from and it might have loads of options. But *Peak Performance*'s look and plays like a dog's bum.

Score 5

NBA Live 98

EA • £44.99 • Basketball

A perfectly reasonable basketball game though not much different to the previous one. Looks fine, plays OK and you'll pass a good few hours engrossed in this, but it's just a bit uninspiring.

Score 7

NFL Gameday

Sony • £44.99 • US footy

American footy sim that offers clear and concise presentation and control while adequately balancing the strategy and action parts of the NFL in-game experience. Pity *Madden 97* is a better game.

Score 6

NHL Face Off

Sony • £39.99 • Ice hockey

Sony's rival to EA's famous NHL games doesn't quite cut the mustard. The players are scaled sprites giving the game a fuzzy, jerky feel that we really could live without. (Hockey) Go for *NHL 98*.

Score 5

Novastorm

Psygnosis • £32.99 • 3D Blaster

A game-on-rails abomination that streams video off the CD while drawing flat 2D sprites on the top. Poor collision detection and repetitive gameplay add up to a turgid package. Nice music though.

Score 4

Overboard

Psygnosis • £44.99 • Blaster

A mad, cartoony mix of puzzles and blasting. Steer a tiny pirate ship through complex levels opening doors, dodging traps and taking on enemies in kerazy power-up enhanced combat. Great fun.

Score 8

Perfect Weapon

EA • £44.99 • Fighting

Billed as a cross between *Resident Evil* and *Tekken 2* this is more like a cross between watching paint dry and having your fingernails ripped out. It's fiddly, it's tedious, it's stupidly frustrating.

Score 6

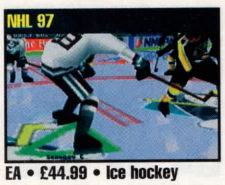
Need For Speed

EA • £34.99 • Driving

Here, limping into the pits, comes *Need For Speed*. Jerky and messy-looking and yet insanely popular with small easily led infants. Yes, you can 'drive' smart cars but who gives a monkeys. It's v. poor.

Score 3

NHL 97



EA • £44.99 • Ice hockey

A polygonal hockey extension of EA's famous 16-bit NHL games. It's fast, it's easy to play, it's, in a word, great. The best hockey there is. Why *FIFA 97* isn't as playable, speedy and smooth is a mystery.

Score 7

NHL Face Off '97

Sony • £39.99 • Hockey

Sack the lot of them. The developers have obviously spent all year with their feet up as this is identical to last years limp offering. It's plain shabby looking when comparison to EA's *NHL 98*.

Score 5

Nuclear Strike

Virgin • £44.99 • Shooter

Preferable to *Soviet Strike* thanks to improved graphics, a smoother 3D engine and the possibility of 'striking' within 13 different vehicles. The usual tip top presentation helps things along nicely too.

Score 8

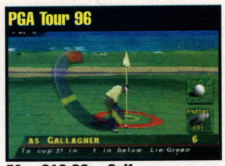
Pandemonium

BMG • £44.99 • Platformer

For all its 3D looks it all comes down to pressing left or right to move and jump to, er, jump. The camera whizzes about to convey 3D but often this only serves to annoy as you must jump off-screen to unseen platforms.

Score 6

PGA Tour 96



EA • £19.99 • Golf

Despite featuring two lush courses and twelve real-life golfers digitised in all their bad-trousered glory *and* coming from sports Gods EA, we nevertheless prefer the 3D polygon based *Actua Golf* thanks.

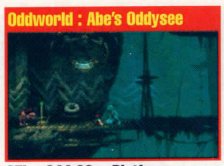
Score 5

must buy!

Don't ask why. Just do it. Read this box to find out what you must chuck your money at this month instead of that game you fancy. You'll be glad you did.

Have you used the snazzy stickers that we bagged with this issue yet? Of course you have. But listen for a moment. We use Macintosh computers to create the mag each month and in a way, these Macs become our little office friends... part of the furniture really. And because they're so dear to us, we dress them up by installing nice pictures on the desktop. However, every so often we get bored with the picture so we change it. The point of this? Well, in a few weeks, or a month or so, you'll get bored of those stickers on your PlayStation and you'll want to change them, but you won't be able to because *PlayStation Power* will have sold out. With that in mind, this month's Must Buy is, yes, ANOTHER COPY OF *PLAYSTATION POWER*. That way you can get one or more sets of stickers and change them whenever you want. And don't go thinking we're saying this just so we sell more magazine. Perish the thought. We just want you to benefit from this great freebie, honest!

Oddworld : Abe's Oddysee



GTI • £44.99 • Platformer

Flash graphics hide a 2D platform game. But what a platform game! A mixture of fast action, spooky special skills and *Lemmings*-style puzzle solving it'll have you hooked for days. Imaginative and unique.

Score 9

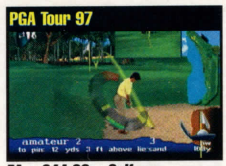
Pandemonium 2

BMG • £44.99 • Platformer

Pandemonium's left to right action was bearable first time around, but this second outing is a joke. Great graphics, but the gameplay stinks. Leaps of faith abound in a game that's sloppy and, worse still, dull.

Score 4

PGA Tour 97



EA • £44.99 • Golf

Criminally similar to *PGA Tour 96*: two courses, twelve digitised golfers, blah, blah. It's a disappointment. And it's still as dull as dishwater in the views and options department. Buy *Actua Golf*.

Score 6

Olympic Soccer

US Gold • £35.99 • Soccer

Competent but uninspiring footy sim. Easy to pick up and play but lacking the complexity and depth of *Actua* and the outrageous gameplay excitement of *aPS*. Solid and dependable.

Score 6

Panzer General

Mindscape • £33.99 • Wargame

A hex-based wargames that is basically an old PC game. It's like a camouflaged, historic game of overgrown chess in a bee-hive and you'll either love it or be utterly disinterested in it.

Score 5

PGA Tour 98

EA • £39.99 • Golf sim

A highly detailed golf sim, and one that has enough depth and accuracy to satisfy videogame golfers. But it sadly lacks graphical realism and the control system is highly frustrating. A bit ragged.

Score 5

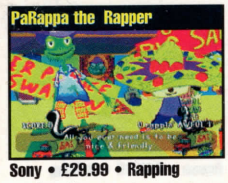
Onside Soccer

Telstar • £39.99 • Soccer sim

An unhappy marriage between footy action and the tedious facts 'n' figures based management game. Not a bad idea but both bits are awful, shallow and dull. Not even Jo Guest could save this one.

Score 4

PaRappa the Rapper



Sony • £29.99 • Rapping

Totally unlike any other game ever before. Hit buttons in time to the music to make PaRappa 'rap'. Rap 'Good' to gain access to the next lesson. Shame it's way too short meaning you'll finish it in hours...

Score 8

Pitball

Time Warner • £44.99 • Sports

A sci-fi sports game, startlingly similar to the superior *Riot*. It's all a little tricky to master with confusing camera angles and some very rapid multiple button presses required in order for anything to happen.

Score 5

Player Manager

Anco • £44.99 • Management

Delivering all the stat-heavy, lumpy-looking footy management thrills you could want. It's dull, it looks awful. It is, in short, footy management. It's okay but a brush up on the graphics would have helped.

Score 6

Project Overkill

Konami • £39.99 • Blaster

Shooting people and watching the ketchup spurt can be fun but we demand more from our isometric blasters. Such as a bit of variety. And this isn't gorgeous looking either.

Score 7

Raging Skies

Warner • £37.99 • Arcade flyer

Cheek-flapping jet fighter action that remains rather poor. It's let down by too little variation between the missions and too few possible flying skills to hone. Ultimately – boring.

Score 5

Ray Tracer

Sony • £34.99 • Racing

Not a proper racer but a re-jig of old arcade hit *Chase HQ*, in which you race along a length of road charging into enemies on your way to an extra-tough boss vehicle. It's insanely fast arcade fun. Nice.

Score 7

Rise of the Robots 2

Mirage • £39.99 • Beat-'em-up

The sequel to what is probably still the worst beat-'em-up ever created. Sure it's rather better but this 2D, jerky, fuzzy robotic rucking still fails to provide anything resembling entertainment. Bad.

Score 3

Road Rash

EA • £19.99 • Arcade racing

Race motorbikes, lashing out every so often in an attempt to knock one of your foes on his sorry ass. Badly animated bikes, ugly tracks and ropey gameplay make *Road Rash* a solid gone 32-bit disappointment.

Score 4

PO'ed

Interplay • £44.99 • 3D blaster

It's *Doom*... but it isn't! Be a futuristic chef and hit chickens bums on legs WITH A PAN! It's true. You can look up and down but the scenery looks as if it'll fall to bits if you do it too vigorously. Bong!

Score 4

Project X2

Ocean • £44.99 • Blaster

A very old skool, and consequently rather dated-looking 2D blaster. It's an old Amiga game after all. It's a little too colourful in places, leading to confusion. And a little mid-eighties-samey too.

Score 7

Rally Cross

Sony • £34.99 • Rally driving

One of the new crop of rally-style racing games but rather than going all-out for realism this offers a more arcadey experience that while initially exciting won't give the same long-term thrills as *V-Rally*.

Score 8

Rebel Assault 2

Virgin • £44.99 • 3D Blaster

Another crumbly PC outing heads PlayStation-wards. We don't care how Star Wars mad you are, this repetitive, simple and above all way too short game cannot be recommended. Sorry.

Score 4

Ridge Racer

Namco • £19.99 • Racing

Although surpassed by *Revolution* (below) this Platinum title remains head and shoulders above practically every other racing game. This superb arcade hit will keep you busy for weeks.

Score 8

Robopit

T•HQ • £39.99 • Beat-'em-up

Cute robots get tooled-up with different weaponry and engage each other in tiny cartoon fights. When compared to the likes of *Tekken* this looks about as clever as going to the toilet with your trousers on.

Score 3

Porsche Challenge

Sony • £34.99 • Sim racer

The best two-player racer you can buy. Drive £33,000 Porsches around a total of 24 track variations in a host of race options. Stunning graphics and a solid highly playable feel. The business.

Score 9

Psychic Force

Acclaim • £39.99 • Beat-'em-up

No way. Sorry. Not at all. So your fighters fly about in a cube offering a 'new' style of 3D fighting? We don't care. This is clumsy, ugly and too many special moves make the game pointless and annoying.

Score 3

Rapid Racer

Sony • £34.99 • Racing

Gorgeous to look at, thanks to its astounding hi-res graphics, and highly novel, due to it's speedboat subject matter but a surprisingly dull game. More of a graphics demo than a hi-octane racer.

Score 7

Reloaded

Gremlin • £36.99 • Blaster

DISAPPOINTED! *Loaded* was fun for a while but rather limited. *Reloaded* could have been great rather than uncomfortably familiar with the odd 'neat touch' lobbed in. And it all feels so fudgy!

Score 7

Ridge Racer Revolution

Namco • £19.99 • Racing

Tweaked playability, tuned-up speed, the impressive new track and the two-player link-up mode give this game the edge. The brilliant graphics are only surpassed by superlative gameplay. Top.

Score 9

Rosco McQueen

Sony • £34.99 • 3D Platformer

Explore a cartoony building putting out fires with your packpack hosepipe and rescuing trapped civilians. Beware evil robots need fighting too. A fun but simple little game belies its garish good looks.

Score 7

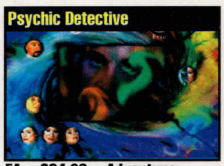
Power Move Wrestling

Activision • £44.99 • Wrestling

A wrestling game that opts for realism. Not a bad 'move' but minus specials you're left with some rather limp grabs and kicks made entertaining by the fact that the strange sausage-men look ridiculous.

Score 5

Psychic Detective



EA • £34.99 • Adventure

It's an interactive movie – run away! Yes, there's 14 different endings to muddle through to here but after seeing a few of them you'll have seen enough of this ropey old tosh to last you a lifetime.

Score 4

Rapid Reload

Sony CE • £32.99 • Platformer

It's an old-school 2D scrolling platform shoot-'em-up in a similar vein (the awful) *Mega Man X3*. It's packed with brightly coloured things having a pop at you but it's very Japanese instead of very good.

Score 4

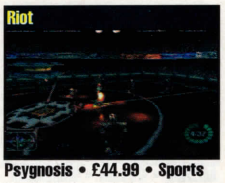
Resident Evil

Virgin • £44.99 • Adventure

Recently surpassed by REDC below. Polygonal monsters live in a pre-rendered house just waiting to have the crap blown out of them with big guns. The most scary and gripping game you will ever play.

Score 8

Riot



Psygnosis • £44.99 • Sports

Not football, not basketball, not ice hockey but an intriguing and futuristic mix of all three. A sleek-looking Psygnosis effort but nowhere near as much fun as normal footy or basketball.

Score 6

Sampras Extreme Tennis

Codemasters • £36.99 • Tennis

The usual tennis niggles crop up (difficulty in judging the position of the ball relative to your player) but the neat polygon graphics and massively comprehensive range of courts and cameras are great.

Score 8

Power Source

Sony • £4.99 • Compilation

A charity compilation of demos for a fiver. Starring *Tomb Raider, Porsche Challenge, Monster Trucks, Destruction Derby 2, Excalibur 2555AD, Riot, Robotron X, Spider, Exhumed.* Buy it. It's a bargain.

Score 6

Rage Racer

Namco • £39.99 • Racer

The best arcade racer you can buy. Insanely fast with moody looks and umpteen car and track options. The ridiculously grippy, arcade handling and lack of a split-screen let this down. Slightly.

Score 9

Rayman

UbiSoft • £19.99 • Platformer

Nauseatingly bright, frustratingly difficult old skool platformer. It's basically a harder and better looking 16-bit game and is therefore firmly resident in average-ville on your PlayStation.

Score 5

Resident Evil Director's Cut

Virgin • £34.99 • Adventure

Take *Resident Evil* and add a harder Advanced version with more monsters and swapped around objects. PLUS a 20 minute playable demo CD of *Resident Evil 2*! A must for newcomers and fans alike.

Score 9

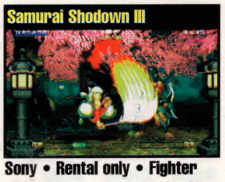
Risk

Hasbro • £44.99 • Bored Game

You have only to read the entry for *Monopoly* to see what we think of this. It's Risk, and it's jolly well executed. But why pay £45 for a game that's far more fun around a table with mates and a few beers?

Score 4

Samurai Shodown III



Sony • Rental only • Fighter

Another of those rental only old SNK Neo Geo fighters. This one is even madder than *KOF '95* and, it has to be said, greatly inferior. £3.50 for a couple of night of this isn't the bargain you might think.

Score 3

Pro Pinball: The Web

Empire • £19.99 • Pinball

The Web features three (ever so slightly different) views but only one table! It is a nice table and the ball moves rather neatly but you'll tire of this before the afternoon's out.

Score 5

Raiden

Ocean • £33.99 • Shoot-'em-up

Looking about as up to date as your Grandad's hat and yet still surprisingly pleasant to play. Scroll up the screen and shoot lots of stuff. Whee! Boom! Whee! Boom! You know the score.

Score 3

Ray Storm

Virgin • £39.99 • Arcade flight

We love it, but its simplistic game-play (shoot stuff and don't die) and lack of variety or length stymie it good and proper. Brilliant use of 3D graphics meets top retro-styled shooty action. Good effort.

Score 7

Return Fire

Time Warner • £36.99 • Action

Drive around in tiny tanks and jeeps blowing things up. It really comes alive in the two-player flag-grabbing spilt-screen, both players choosing a vehicle then storming each other's bases. Great music too.

Score 7

Robotron X

GTI • £44.99 • 3D shooter

A 3D remake of the arcade hit that suffers in the third dimension. It's too fast and mad and ultimately, like its predecessor you just run around a flat, boring arena and shoot stuff over and over again.

Score 4

Sentient

Psygnosis • £44.99 • Adventure

A daring and ambitious redesign of the point and click adventure. Fine graphics and amazingly complex character AI but the ceaseless wandering may be too aimless for all but the most inquisitive.

Score 8

Shadow Master

Psygnosis• £44.99 • Shooter

Graphically, this 3D blaster is a cracker. And the gameplay isn't too bad either, although it's not particularly original. Once again though, Psygnosis have shown their mastery of the PlayStation

Score 8

Soul Blade

Namco • £44.99 • Beat-'em-up

Namco very nearly top their superlative *Tekkens* with this sword-flailing fighter. The HUGE 'n' gorgeous characters fight in lavish 3D arenas, unleashing amazing martial arts moves. Superb.

Score 9

Speedster

Psygnosis • £44.99 • Racer

Basically *Micro Machines V3* only with 'real' cars. Serious scenery and sensible handling meets weeny cars and all the bumping and jostling thrills this entails. You're still much better off with *MMV3* though.

Score 7

Street Racer

Ubi Soft • £44.99 • Racer

Komedy karting for youngsters. Choose yourself a 'funny' character and charge round 3D-but-but-not-very-3D courses. Inadequate, motion sickness-inducing views and poxy controls round things off 'nicely'.

Score 3

Supersonic Racers

Mindscape • £44.99 • Racer

It's Micro Machines but in 3D basically. But then so is the superb *Micro Machines V3*, which is quite simply better than this fair looking but frustrating to play effort cartoony car racing effort.

Score 6

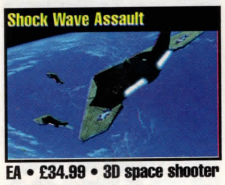
Tenka

Psygnosis • £44.99 • Doom

Despite cleverly using 3D polygons to form it's levels and baddies, this technical feat makes no difference to gameplay whatsoever. Tenka is a competent *Doom*-clone but as such is inferior to *Doom* and *Exhumed*.

Score 7

Shock Wave Assault



EA • £34.99 • 3D space shooter

Flat, shabby scenery and a painfully difficult alien-blasting 3D challenge. Fly a spaceship over supposedly different planets shooting things. Far more frustrating than it is rewarding.

Score 3

Soviet Strike

EA • £44.99 • Helicopter-'em-up

Fly your chopper over isometrically viewed, stunning-looking terrain with an assortment of drool-worthy weaponry. It all adds up to a satisfying, though it has to be said, exceedingly tough, blast.

Score 7

Starfighter 3000

Telstar • £37.99 • 3D blaster

A 3D shooter in which the camera hovers behind your pointy craft as it floats over polygonal terrain. However, your craft, for all its futuristic 3000-ness, flies like a glider in a vat of treacle. Daft.

Score 5

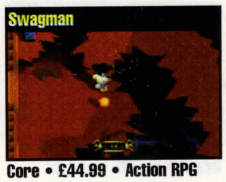
Striker '96

Time Warner • £37.99 • Soccer

A stupidly fast soccer sim flawed by a dodgy pitch perspective that you can't alter and a mad two-footed tackle that'll have you weeping with disgust into your half-time, half-an-orange.

Score 3

Swagman



Core • £44.99 • Action RPG

Disappointingly from the *Tomb Raider* creators, this old-style RPG mixes rapid button pressing with the usual key-finding, door-opening shenanigans. It's certainly big game just not a very impressive one.

Score 7

Tennis Arena

Ubisoft • £39.99 • Tennis sim

Lightweight, fun tennis sim in the *Smash Court* mould only with realistic looking polygonal players. Ultimately a lack of shot control and depth makes this, despite it's looks, even simpler than old *Smash*.

Score 7

SimCity 2000

Maxis • £44.99 • Strategy/sim

The most famous strategy game of the lot. Build a tiny town, placing buildings hither and thither, then sit back and watch it develop into your own personal huge city. Great fun, if a little dull.

Score 7

Space Hulk

EA • £34.99 • 3D Blaster

Originally a model-shuffling board game it's now a 3D blaster ripping off *Doom* mercilessly while adding adventurey dialogue and missions. Thing is it's too slow and fiddly to play for extended periods.

Score 6

Star Gladiator

Virgin • £44.99 • Beat-'em-up

Capcom go 3D for the first time to create a solid, dependable blade-clasher that looks great and plays beautifully. However, as with all fighters this ain't no *Tekken* nor is it a 3D *Street Fighter*.

Score 8

Strikepoint

Elite • £44.99 • Helicopter sim

An enjoyable helicopter sim with an action-packed bent. However, the graphics err on the side of the functional rather than the attractive and it's 'blessed' with rather fiddly controls.

Score 7

Syndicate Wars

EA • £44.99 • Action/strategy

Not the ultimate game that it was supposed to be but a fine strategy game nontheless. Lots of missions some neat 3D trickery and exciting gameplay but it still takes second place to *Command & Conquer*.

Score 8

Ten Pin Alley

EA • £44.99 • Bowling sim

An obviously stupid and idiotic idea and yet great fun if you're prepared to switch your brain off. It's bowling basically, with silly characters and nice graphics and effects. Daft but highly enjoyable.

Score 6

Slam 'N' Jam

BMG • £36.99 • Basketball

3D basketball – but only just. The behind-basket view makes life difficult and even the 'big' names of Magic, Kareem and Abdul Jabbar can't lift this poor effort out of the 'mundane' bin.

Score 3

Space Jam

Acclaim • £44.99 • Basketball

Limp. You can dress it up with film tie-ins and cartoony presentation but this remains a grossly simplistic basketball game. The large fuzzy characters messily meld too, making the game almost unplayable.

Score 3

Street Fighter EX plus Alpha

Virgin • £44.99 • Beat-'em-up

Yes! At last! *Street Fighter* in 3D! All the classic characters (plus loads more) are here and it looks and plays brilliantly. Thing is, it *really is* just *Street Fighter* in 3D so don't expect any great changes.

Score 9

Suikoden

Konami • £44.99 • RPG

It's 16-bit graphics will bring back lovely memories of *Secret of Mana* on the SNES and it's nicely twisting plot will keep hat 'n' cloak wearers suitably perplexed and entertained. Good, solid, stirring stuff.

Score 7

Tekken

Sony • £19.99 • 3D Beat-'em-up

Fantastic fighter that is only surpassed by its follow up. Fab graphics, lots of fighters, each with their own boss to discover and some superb special moves too. And all for £19.99. Lovely.

Score 9

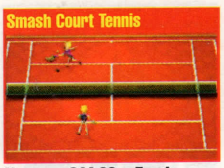
Test Drive 4

EA • £39.99 • Racing game

This is precisely what the rather turdy *Need For Speed 2* should have been. Loads of real cars, very original and lengthy track designs and superbly different handling on all the featured cars. Terrific.

Score 8

Smash Court Tennis



Namco • £44.99 • Tennis

The PlayStation version of Namco's famous 16-bit *Smash Tennis* is a pinnacle of gameplay excellence. The simple, stick-men graphics betray the horribly addictive game beneath. Perfection.

Score 9

Spider

BMG• £44.99 • 3D Platformer

It's yet another mock-3D platformer. This time you control a robotic, missile-flingin' spider who can dangle from platforms via his web. The nice ideas don't make up for the repetitive platform leaping.

Score 6

Street Fighter Alpha

Virgin • £44.99 • Beat-'em-up

Lovely manga-style characters, all the moves and a top power-bar system further aid its superiority over all other beat-'em-ups. Great, but recently surpassed by its follow-up, below.

Score 8

Super Pang

Ocean • £39.99 • Arcade sim

An ancient arcade game and hit 16-bit SNES title, *Super Pang* offers three slightly different variations on the balloon popping 2D game that's so simple and yet so horribly addictive. Classic gaming.

Score 8

Tekken 2

Sony • £44.99 • 3D Fighter

The best you can buy. The characters now look even better, looking and behaving like real people, miniaturised, then placed inside your PlayStation. Only a fool would turn his nose up at this.

Score 10

Test Drive Off-Road

Eidos • £44.99 • Racing

Another off-road racer. This one has all the pop-up of *Monster Trucks* but none of the good looks while offering the same 'no fun' clumsy bumpy racing of *Hardcore 4x4*. Quite simply not any good.

Score 4

Soccer '97

Eidos • £39.99 • Footy sim

Olympic Soccer with updated teams. NOT the best footy game around but an easy to pick up, enjoyable game all the same. However, the fact that there are better makes this totally redundant.

Score 5

Steel Reign

Sony • £34.99 • 3D Shooter

Should have been a belter but this mission-based military game from Sony is rather disappointing. It's OK, but mindless. Not nearly accurate enough or strategic enough for that matter.

Score 6

Street Fighter Alpha 2

Virgin • £44.99 • Beat-'em-up

As above but with more characters, even better animation and an improved, super-intuitive feel. Loved by newcomers and past *SF* masters alike. The best 2D fighter you can buy – no question.

Score 9

Super Puzzle Fighter 2

Virgin • £29.99 • Puzzler

Mad *Street Fighter* puzzling. Currently surpassing even *Bust-A-Move 2* for in-office dispute-settling two-player action. It's not Tetris is something even better. We're totally mad for it. Ooshka!

Score 9

Tempest X3

Interplay • £44.99 • Shooter

It's the latest reworking of old arcade great *Tempest*. A simple game (shoot stuff and don't die) that looks a bit oldy-worldy but it's a belter. It's just a shame that *Atari Classics* features a superb, arcade perfect version too…

Score 8

Tetris Plus

JVC • £44.99 • Puzzler

Yes. It really is *Tetris*, only in colour and not on a Gameboy. That's about it. There's a great two player mode (as per Gameboy link-up) and everything is exactly as you would want it to be. Truly a classic game. Ace.

Score 8

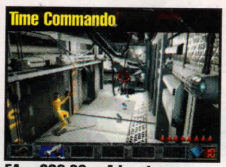
Tetris X

JVC • £44.99 • Puzzler

The ultimate puzzler. It's exactly as you know and love it but with a dynamite battling four-player mode lobbed in to. Thing is, these days we prefer *Bust-A-Move 2* and *Super Puzzle Fighter 2*.

Score 7

Time Commando



EA • £39.99 • Adventure

A curious combo of *Alone in the Dark*-style characters and pre-rendered scrolling beat-'em-up with tediously samey, kick, walk, kick, walk, yawn gameplay. The sluggish controls don't help either.

Score 6

Tomb Raider 2

Core • £44.99 • 3D Action

Eighteen jaw-dropping levels, increased speed, more responsive control, better graphics, more traps, puzzles and enemies and some superb cut scenes. Precisely what we wanted from this sequel.

Score 9

Transport Tycoon

Ocean • £39.99 • Strategy/sim

It's *SimCity 2000* but with trains instead. Wasn't that *AIV Evolution Global*? Well, yes, but so's this. Dur… Unless you're a train-mad spong (yet again) you'd best turn to *SimCity 2000* for your sim thrills.

Score 4

Twisted Metal World Tour

Sony • £44.99 • Driving

A great improvement on the original game adding lots of huge famous city-themed levels and some neat new vehicles and weapons. It's still not gorgeous to look at though which is a shame.

Score 8

Viewpoint

Sony • £44.99 • Shoot-'em-up

An old arcade game gets a wash and brush up. Mind you, it's exceedingly tough to make up for it's rather measly length. Slightly confusing graphics will have you crashing and burning too.

Score 6

The King of the Fighters '95

Sony • Rental only • Fighter

An old Neo Geo fighting game from SNK with all the scaling-sprites and dated 2D graphics this entails. It was a bit of a classic in its time but those days are gone. The '95 in the title says it all really.

Score 6

Time Crisis

Namco • £54.99 • Lightgun

Eagerly awaited and yet, now that it's arrived rather disappointing. It comes packaged with the G-Con 45 lightgun hence that exorbitant price tag, but it only offers a few days worth of entertainment. Shame.

Score 7

Top Gun

Microprose • £39.99 • Flyer

A pathetic Top Gun movie spin-off. The between level movie bits are sub-standard in the extreme and the game just involves trying to corner some badly drawn planes! Don't buy this. You heard me, boy?

Score 3

Track & Field

Konami • £19.99 • Button bash

Make your athlete run by bashing buttons, leading to some very simplistic gameplay. There's eleven events to have a crack at but they're all virtually identical It's fantastic fun in four-player mode, though.

Score 7

Ultimate Parodius Deluxe

Konami • £34.99 • Shoot-'em-up

The classic old horizontally-scrolling shoot-'em-up which first appeared in the arcades then as a famous SNES game. Here it's been dolled-up with even more really mad graphics though is as simple a blast as ever.

Score 5

Virtual Pool

Interplay • £44.99 • Pool sim

All the fun of the pub without any of the other stuff. While accurately capturing the physics of the sport and featuring some nifty views and controls a presentation tweak would have been most welcome.

Score 8

The Lost World

EA • £44.99 • Platformer

Be a compy, a raptor and human hunter and trot through lush 3D scenery. A *Pandemonium*-style mock 3D platformer that looks great but a mad difficulty curve and totally unfair baddies spoil it.

Score 7

TOCA Touring Car

Codemasters• £44.99 • Racing

One of the very best racers around at the moment. The shoddy presentation, grainy graphics and lack of set-up options prevent it being a 9/10 but otherwise, this is a fantastically playable racer.

Score 8

Total Drivin'

Ocean • £44.99 • Racer

Take the weighty car and track options of *V-Rally* and add the arcadey and FUN racing style of *Rage Racer* and this is what you get. Smart graphics, speed, 40 cars and 20 odd tracks. Awe inspiring.

Score 9

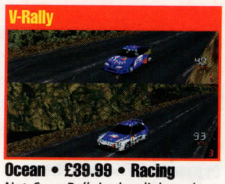
Trash It

Rage • £44.99 • Platformer

Unfunny platforming action for kids or simple adults. Collect mallets called 'Timmies' and destroy obstacles with increasingly large hammers for no reason at all. It's not fun, it's a painful chore.

Score 3

V-Rally

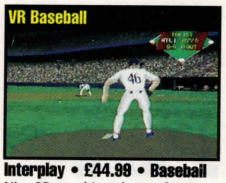


Ocean • £39.99 • Racing

Not *Sega Rally* in the slightest but a new style of ultra-realistic driving game. You'll be all over the shop initially but persevere and you can master the 45 (45!) tracks on offer in this superlative racer.

Score 9

VR Baseball



Interplay • £44.99 • Baseball

Nice 3D graphics, plenty of options and lots of motion-captured super-realistic malarky but this is essentially baseball, one of the dullest games in the world. It's a little too easily mastered too. Therefore dull.

Score 6

Theme Park

EA • £34.99 • Strategy/sim

Behind the pink fluffy cartoon-land *Theme Park* which you must control (setting the prices of ice creams and building new ever more exciting rides, etc) lies a complex business sim. Neat.

Score 6

Tobal No.1

Sony • £44.99 • 3D Fighter

This looks a little dull in comparison to the textured *Tekken 2*. The ability to move around the ring is unique and slightly dubious character design (robots, old men) make this 'Interesting' rather than 'Good'.

Score 7

Total Eclipse

BMG • £34.99 • 3D shoot-'em-up

Sub-standard in practically every department. Fly into the screen and shoot stuff while avoiding the scenery, which, thanks to the design and on-screen placing of your ship, leaps out of nowhere.

Score 3

True Pinball

Ocean • £19.99 • Pinball

There are four tables here each with a choice of 2D vertically-scrolling and 3D into-the-screen perspectives. Competent and precise ball physics help things along nicely. It's still pinball though.

Score 6

Vandal Hearts

Konami • £39.99 • Strategy

A battle RPG that may well convert a few ex-pixie-haters to the pointy-hatting cause. It's a turn-based strategy game with lashings of plot and whizzy graphics smeared on top. Great.

Score 8

WarCraft 2

EA • £44.99 • Action/Strategy

Its lumpy looks conceal a game of startling complexity. It's a very close thing between this and *C&C* but thanks to the bizarre gameplay the 'magic' elements allow we currently prefer it. It's a matter of taste.

Score 9

Tiger Shark

GTI • £44.99 • Shoot-'em-up

Pleasant enough but rather drab shooter based on the premise of being both a submarine AND a boat. Woooo! It's just another pop-up ridden 3D flight game really, with varied but unexciting missions.

Score 5

Tokyo Highway Battle

T•HQ • £44.99 • Racing

A curious racer that, thanks to the realism of the cars on offer, never quite goes at the speed you desire. There is loads of variety in the vehicles and races though meaning you'll be up all night with this one.

Score 8

Total NBA '96

Sony • £19.99 • Basketball

A faithfully realistic basketball simulation that also benefits from an arcade mode. Eight camera angles and excellent gameplay make this the best in its class. The best basketball game you can buy.

Score 8

Tunnel B1

Ocean • £44.99 • 3D blaster

It's fast, it's got great explosions and it'll give you a real challenge for your money but this is offset with slightly samey level and enemy designs and occasionally excessive trickiness.

Score 8

Victory Boxing

JVC • £44.99 • Boxing sim

VB looks, feels, and plays differently to any other fighter. There's a surprising amount of strategy involved with blocks and dodges being just as important as your jabs and hooks.

Score 8

War Gods

GTI • £44.99 • Beat-'em-up

Grrr! Look at me! Tremble at the might of my antlers and thong, varlet! Grrr! What a stupid game. The characters look awful, the moves are terrible and the whole thing is totally laughable. Shocking.

Score 3

Tilt

EA • £37.99 • Pinball

It's the best pinball game you can get. There are six tables all of which can be viewed from top-down scrolly view or super-duper 3D perspective view. Great physics and top tables. Shame it's just pinball…

Score 7

Tomb Raider

Core • £39.99 • 3D Adventure

Go and buy this now. *Tomb Raider* blends action and exploration into a single stunning whole. The masterful level design will have you weeping with joy. It's your next essential purchase.

Score 9

Total NBA '97

Sony • £44.99 • Basketball

Better looking than '96 BUT less fun to play. Amazing. Tweaks to tune-up the gameplay have stupidly resulted in a more awkward game with dubious player AI. It's gorgeous but dim.

Score 7

Twisted Metal

Sony • £37.99 • Driving

This futuristic 3D first-person racer with a shooting and ramming element is great fun, although limited tracks and slightly scruffy graphics spoil things a bit. Not racing and not blasting but top.

Score 7

Virtual Golf

Core • £39.99 • Golf sim

Fine at the time but very chunky and sprite-riddled these days. Its big selling point was its free-flying camera, which the PGA games lack. However, *Actua Golf 2* has all this and more. Pity really.

Score 4

Warhammer

Mindscape • £39.99 • Strategy

Dwarfs and goblins slug it out in this action/strategy adaptation of the popular role-playing board games. Think of it as a fantasy/medieval *Command & Conquer* and you wont go far wrong.

Score 8

Warhawk

Sony • £38.99 • Heli sim

A very early game which was the first airborne blaster. It certainly feels okay to play, and there's plenty going on but, thanks to its slightly beardy graphics, is beginning to show its age.

Score 5

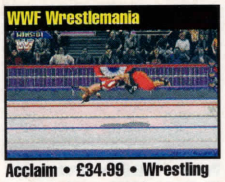
Wing Over

JVC • £44.99 • Air combat

Air combat with that familiar PlayStation mix of arcade action and real-world flight-sim physics. The twist? You get to fly all kinds of crumbly and swish aircraft. Good fun if a little fiddly to play.

Score 7

WWF Wrestlemania

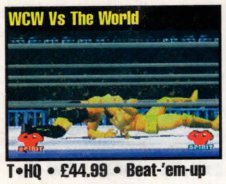


Acclaim • £34.99 • Wrestling

Its very silly but some funny graphics, and plenty of moves and a reassuring reliance on timing mean that you'll waste away the hours happily trying to gain eventual lycra-clad mastery.

Score 5

WCW Vs The World



T•HQ • £44.99 • Beat-'em-up

The most serious wrestler yet. Lots of Dad-like, peroxide-haired trunk-wearers amble and thud around the ring in 3D, unleashing some praiseworthy (though comical) special wrestling moves. Okayish.

Score 7

Wipeout

Psygnosis • £19.99 • Racer

An absolute classic. Tricky to get to grips with but oh so rewarding once you master your sled's extreme speed and floaty but fair controls. And now it's on Platinum for £19.99. An essential buy.

Score 9

X-COM: Enemy Unknown

Microprose • £29.99 • Strategy

Not a great looker but beneath its crusty exterior lies a solid and dependable game. Manoeuvre your isometrically viewed forces to block an impending alien invasion. Engrossing and a huge challenge.

Score 6

Wild Arms

Sony • £34.99 • RPG

A huge game and, until *FFVII* appears, the best RPG on the PlayStation. As in *Suikoden* there's very little 32-bit stuff going on and the random turn-based battles can be a bind, but we say it's a winner.

Score 8

Wipeout 2097

Psygnosis • £44.99 • Racer

There's a new, slower Vector class and more forgiving collisions but also an even faster Phantom class, improved enemy AI and some screen-shattering new weapons to test even Wipeout masters.

Score 9

X-COM: Terror from the Deep

Microprose • £44.99 • Strategy

The follow up to Enemy Unknown adds surprisingly little. Sure there's new stuff, sure the graphics are slightly improved but this simply won't be attracting any new players as it's just more of the same.

Score 6

Williams Arcade's Greatest Hits

Williams • £39.99 • Arcade sim

Crumbly old games, anyone? There's *Defender*, *Robotron* (by far the creams of this crop), *Bubbles*, *Joust*, *Sinistar* and *Defender II* here. Yet again, these games just ain't what they used to be.

Score 6

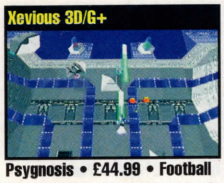
World Cup Golf

Ocean • £39.99 • Golf sim

Exactly the same 2D-graphics-depict-3D-views business as the best selling PGA Tour 97. And, like that self same game, it's rather too flat-looking and view-lacking for the realism it aims to depict.

Score 3

Xevious 3D/G+



Psygnosis • £44.99 • Football

Missed opportunity. Ancient arcade game and star of *Museum 2*, *Xevious* gets a 3D upgrade that actually adds very little to the original. By retaining the retro feel they've made it a pointless exercise.

Score 5

Wing Commander III

EA • £39.99 • Space opera

A cack-handed amalgamation of interactive movie (urgh) and 3D space shoot-'em-up. It's poxy in the extreme. The interactive movie bits stink and the 3D space combat bits move and play terribly. Pathetic.

Score 3

Worms

Ocean • £44.99 • Action puzzler

Fun for five minutes, this offers more jerky sprite on sprite action, starring fat blokes mincing around in a badly-drawn type of way. It's saved by the unintentionally hilarious action which can result.

Score 4

Yusha

JVC • £39.99 • Beat-'em-up

Extremely standard beat-'em-up fare but with the added problem of having a crap difficulty curve. In graphical and gameplay terms this is nowhere near the Namco fighters. Why did they bother?

Score 4

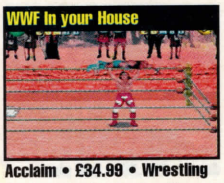
Wing Commander IV

EA • £44.99 • Space opera

A million times better than its shabby forebear, but still not quite the mind-conquering merge of 3D space combat and sci-fi adventuring you were hoping for. We say check out *Darklight Conflict*.

Score 6

WWF In your House



Acclaim • £34.99 • Wrestling

Fun for two minutes, this offers more jerky sprite-on-sprite action, starring fat blokes mincing around in a badly drawn-type way. It's saved by the unintentionally hilarious action that can result.

Score 4

Zero Divide

Ocean • £34.99 • Beat-'em-up

3D fighting with bizarre balloon animal-like robots. Confusing to play (since the fighters don't look like humans) and fights too often degenerate into frantic button hammering. Which is wrong.

Score 5

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Cover Artwork: Virgin & LucasArts ©1997
Colour Origination: Phoenix
Printing by: Cradley Print, Warley, West Midlands

Editorial and Advertisement Offices: *PlayStation Power*, Future Publishing, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath, Avon, BA1 2BW
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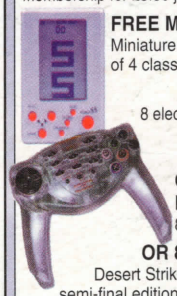

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